

Fort Fairfield Town Council Monthly Meeting
Council Chambers
Wednesday, June 21, 2023
6:00 PM

I. Roll Call

Council: Keith E. Thibeau II, Robert Kilcollins, Pat Canavan, Kevin Pelletier, James Ouellette

Staff: Dan Foster, Neadra Dubois, Tony Levesque, Doug Sharpe, Fire Chief Michael Jalbert,
Police Chief Matthew Cummings, Darren Hanson, Cheryl Boulier

Citizens: 12 citizens present

II. Prayer

Mr. Levesque provided the prayer.

III. Pledge to the Flag

All attendees pledged their allegiance to the flag.

IV. Public Comment Period

Charles Cyr spoke about the Fort Fairfield Revitalization Project and Fridays in Fort. The project is going to lead a community initiative aimed at boosting wealth in businesses and attracting new ventures to this Town. Fridays in Fort will be starting July 7th from 5-8 PM in the Village Square parking lot. There will be food trucks, vendors, a DJ, and a farmer's market with the Amish at this event. It is hopeful that this event will take place once a month to keep the tax dollars in Fort Fairfield. The goal is perhaps to have a system with a co-op. Mr. Cyr also mentions other ideas that have come up as things to do for Fridays in Fort, i.e. a movie night, a soup contest, and a chili cook-off. The goal is to try to stop the tax dollars from going out of town.

V. Correspondence and Reports

A. Licenses and Permits – Boondocks Grille

Mr. Foster asks the Council to approve the Liquor License renewal for Boondocks Grille.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins makes the motion.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Financial Report

Mr. Foster gives the financial report for the Town. The Town has already paid \$250,000 towards the \$500,000 line of credit to the bank and the other \$250,000 will be paid at the end of the month. There is about \$150,000 in bills that will get paid this fiscal year which will leave \$300,000 to \$400,000 left in the bank for going into July. Mr. Foster states that

the Town will get all of the bills paid and will not have to carry over any expenses and debt into the new fiscal year. Mr. Foster gives praise to Department Heads for making this happen.

C. Aroostook Waste Solutions

Stev Rogeski gives the monthly report on Aroostook Waste Solutions. The last meeting was on April 30th. Their income level was below budget by about 12 percent and expenses were down by 14 percent. AWS had a meeting with Jim Wilson about the two new cells, five and six. It will cost about \$6.8 million to build those two new cells. Mr.

The Festival was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Maine Office of Tourism and will be used to fund the Festival Facebook page upgrades, a new website, brochures and photography. The Hampton Inn has reported that because of the Festival, they are completely booked the entire week before and the week of the Festival. Festival t-shirts and hats are ready and on sale at the Town Office as well as Festival Headquarters, when open. Brochures and booklets will be distributed next week. The Festival Headquarters will be in the historic Key Bank building this year.

- F. Fort Fairfield Community Empowerment Project
Mr. Foster states that Catherine Ingraham has been helping the Town by gathering comments and putting together recommendations based on the meetings she has had with staff and citizens. Ms. Ingraham gives an update on what she has done so far with the Community Empowerment Project. There have been 20 responses to the online survey and so far, the comments have been mostly positive and people shared additional thoughts.

- G. MSAD #20 New High School Principal
Mr. Foster publicly congratulates Garret Marten for becoming the new High School Principal.

- H. Speed Limit Sign on Brunswick Ave
Mr. Foster reports on the process of getting new school zone speed limit signs for Brunswick Ave. Sergeant Cormier has submitted applications to the Maine State Department of Transportation for the school zone signs, which are provided free of charge, but could take up to two years to complete the process and get the signs. The thought is, that in the meantime, the Town could purchase signs that Chief Cummings had found and have them put up before school starts in the fall.

- I. Bison Ordinance Process
Chief Cummings reports on the Bison issue and the process of getting regulations from Augusta before creating an Ordinance. There's no need to rush. The Town should see what they can do to push Augusta on this issue and see what can come of it. Chief Cummings stresses the point of taking the time to do it right and be thoughtful with it.

- J. Main Street Revitalization Report
Councilor Canavan reports on the Main Street Revitalization Project. There is too much being lost in this Town and it's time to do something positive to put stuff back. There is a core group of six or seven people that talk about ways to make Fort Fairfield a business-friendly community and bring businesses in. They coordinate business in. They

bringing businesses in. They intend to involve the rest of the Council and people in the Town as much as they can. Councilor Canavan states that it's going to take a community to build this community back and that's what they want to do. They are welcoming new members and anyone can join or go to the next meeting, which is next Thursday in the Village Square parking lot.

- K. Quality of Place Council – 2021 Spirit of America Award for Fort Fairfield
Mr. Foster received a letter from the County Commissioners Office announcing that the Quality of Place Council is the recipient of the 2021 Spirit of America award for Fort Fairfield. The award will be presented at a celebration on July 21st in Presque Isle.

 - L. NMDC Annual Meeting – June 22, 2023
NMDC is holding their annual meeting June 22nd. Mr. Foster will be attending, representing Fort Fairfield.

 - M. Limestone Subdivision Rail Use Advisory Council Request
Mr. Foster discusses the Limestone Subdivision Rail Use Advisory Council and the rail line that runs from Caribou, through Fort Fairfield to Loring. The railway is how they got their coal and it hasn't been used for years. This organization was formed to determine what to do with that railway. All of that has been shelved because of what's going on with development at Loring right now and they are now looking at possibly putting that rail back to use. Mr. Levesque gives a rundown of what development is going on at Loring. Mr. Levesque is cautiously optimistic about this development.

 - N. Fire Marshall Report of Deficiencies on Municipal Complex
Mr. Foster states that Mr. Sharpe, Chief Jalbert and Chief Cummings have gotten everything up to speed to fix the deficiencies from the Fire Marshall's report.

 - O. Bikes and Helmets for Kids
Mr. Foster discusses a project that Chief Cummings has done with giving bikes and helmets to kids. These bikes are all by donations, all organized by Chief Cummings and advertising was done mostly on Facebook. Last year they gave out 57 bikes. This year they gave out 78 bikes. Mr. Foster gives hats of to Chief Cummings for wanting to do this, for taking the time to do it, and for organizing and doing it in such a significant way. Mr. Foster states that the community needs to know about this. Chief Cummings thanks Terry Donovan and Paul Everett for putting the bikes together, Chief Jalbert for giving him a place to store the bikes and Chief Jalbert and Sergeant Cormier for numbering and photographing all the bikes.
- VI. Old Business
- A. Approve Ordinance #23-06 – Lease Agreement with Little Sunshine Learning Center
Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned.

Second: Councilor Ouellet e seconded.
Discussion: None.

Vote: All Aff rmat ve.

B. Approve Ordinance #23-07 – Repeal Ordinance #17-08 Prohibit ng Retail Marijuana Establishments

Mr. Foster states that he was asked to present this to allow this retail act vity to happen in Fort Fairf eld. Chief Cummings met with the Police Chief in Presque Isle to discuss the issues involved with having these establishments. Presque Isle has six of these facilit es and it is asked if it is a public safety issue and is it a public nuisance issue. Chief Cummings states that in his discussion with Chief Kelly in Presque Isle, they have a pret y strict Ordinance in place regarding the retail marijuana establishments. He viewed the Ordinance and thinks it is appropriate. Chief Cummings suggests that if Fort Fairf eld is going to do something like that, Presque Isle's would be a good model to follow. Mr. Foster states that the City of Presque Isle generates revenue from the licensing fees and it has not created any kind of a negat ve backlash from the community. There were no comments made for or against this mat er. There was one very thought ul let er from a

VII. New Business

A. Approve Closing Office on June 30th to Complete Year of End Work

Mr. Foster asks the Council to approve closing the Town Office to the public on June 30th so staff can get the end of year work completed.

Motion: Councilor Ouellet e motioned.

Second: Councilor Canavan seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Approve Letter of Engagement with Felch & Co. for Annual Audit

Mr. Foster states that the Town got the Letter of Engagement from Felch and Company to do the Town's annual audit. It is \$500 higher than last year. They are very confident and they do a great job. Mr. Foster asks the Council to approve Felch and Company to do the Town's audit for this fiscal year.

Motion: Councilor Pelletier motioned.

Seconded: Councilor Ouellet e seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

C. Approve 2023-2024 Permits & Licenses

Mr. Foster asks Council to approve the 2023-2024 Permits and Licenses list.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned.

Second: Councilor Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

D. Approve FY 23/24 Appointments of Town Officials & Board/Committee Members

Mr. Foster asks Council to approve the annual appointments of Town Officials and Board/Committee Members.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned.

Second: Councilor Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Canavan asks about the Community Development Advisory Board, the Fair Hearing Authority and the Economic Development Board, saying that they do not have term dates or members listed for the Economic Development Board. Mr. Levesque explains to her that the Community Development Advisory Board is not active at this time and there are no members for the Economic Development Board. The Town still gets credit for having that board, even though it is inactive. Also, the Fair Hearing Authority is a function for the community for General Assistance.

Vote: All Affirmative.

E. Approve Insurance Carrier for FY 23/24

Mr. Foster references a spreadsheet that was handed out to the Council that lists quotes from FA Peabody and United Insurance. Mr. Foster recommends to Council that the Town go with United Insurance for the Town's insurance for the next fiscal year.

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned.
Second: Councilor Ouellet seconded.
Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

F. Approve Reserve Account Activity

Mr. Foster states that there is a fair amount of money in the Administrative Reserve Account and the Police Department could use it because of the things that Department needs, primarily vehicles. Mr. Foster wants to transfer \$50,000 from

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XI. Executive Session – 1 MRSA § 405 (6)(D) – Labor Contract Negotiations
Motion IN: Councilor Kilcollins motioned.
Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

TIME: 7:10 PM

Motion OUT: Councilor Ouellette motioned.
Second: Councilor Kilcollins seconded.

Vote: All Affirmative.

TIME: 7:36 PM

Act on taken:

Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned to accept the contract from CEI and to accept the recommendation for the Committee.

Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

XII. Adjournment
Motion: Councilor Kilcollins motioned to Adjourn.
Second: Councilor Ouellette seconded.
Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

Time Adjourned: 7:38 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Neadra E. Dubois, Council Secretary