

Fort Fairfield Town Council Special Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
Tuesday, June 28, 2022
6:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call

Council: All present

Staff: Andrea Powers, Neadra Dubois, D.C. Fenderson, Tony Levesque, Kevin Senal, Darren Hanson, Ella Leighton, Jennifer Gaenzle, Chief Cummings, Steve Turner

Budget Advisory Committee: Kevin Bouchard, Janet McGillan, Pat Canavan

Legal: Richard Flewelling (MMA Legal)

Citizens: 9 present

II. Prayer

III. Pledge to the Flag

IV. Public Comment

Kevin Bouchard – “You don’t think I’m gonna keep my mouth shut, do you?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I was waiting.”

Kevin Bouchard – “You’ve known me for a while. I got two things I would like to address with you tonight. One has to do with how you conduct yourselves and your meetings. The other has to do with the Ordinance that allegedly appears to be the subject of this Special Meeting. Looking at what was made available to us, as the Agenda for tonight’s meeting, it would appear that this Special Meeting has been called for the purpose of having a Public Hearing on the Ordinance 22-05. That doesn’t make any sense, because that was already held. So you gotta wonder if the Meeting wasn’t called for the Council to act on this ill conceived Ordinance. Well, that Ordinance is not an emergency by any stretch of the imagination. It does not rise to the level to call a Special Council Meeting. So, why are we really here? It appears to me that the Fort Fairfield Town Council and Town Manager are conducting the business of this Town in a manner that’s deliberately organized to stifle input from taxpayers and citizens of the community. Your Agendas do a piss-poor job of detailing what’s to be considered at your Meetings, you make Public Comment available only at the very beginning of the meeting, and if the Public does not really know what will be discussed at the meeting, it’s extremely difficult for them to offer pertinent comments. One has to wonder how your behavior stacks up against the Freedom of Access Act. I, for one, would like to see the Council to become more upfront and more transparent as to matters that come before you at the meetings. This could be as simple as

requiring that any item that will come before you for a formal vote be properly identified on your Agendas. If someone, like the Town Manager, wants to spring something on you at the last minute, without due notice, and inadequate time for proper review and consideration on your parts, it should be for discussion purposes only. If something is legitimately an emergency, requiring a Special Meeting, with Council action, simply needs to be listed on the Agenda, so people, including you as Councilors, can come to your Meetings properly prepared. Ordinance 22-05, I would urge you to either outright reject this Ordinance, or send it back to whomever was the author, in order to fix all the flaws in the document. Be perfectly clear, I am not opposed to revenue enhancements, as we try to deal with the financial mess the Town is in. Any legitimate revenue must be considered along with necessary expense criteria if we are to avoid the financial ruin of this community. This Ordinance serves the opposite purpose. The other thing you should understand about me is, notwithstanding my comments about Fire and EMS budgets, I'm not an enemy of Fire and EMS services. I'm the son of a man that was Fire Chief in Van Buren for almost 40 years. This is a man who was amongst the first to introduce cutting edge concepts and technologies, that at the end of the day improved the Fire Department and reduced costs to property owners in that community. So, support of these services are in my gene's, so to speak. My father was also very frugal with how he spent the Town of Van Buren's tax dollars. The reasons for my recommendation include the Ordinance is out of compliance with several provisions of the Town Charter, the Ordinance has the real potential to increase property insurance costs for the property owners of our community, and therefore suck even more money out of this Town's payers, taxpayers than Fire and EMS is currently extracting out of this community, the Ordinance does not reduce the amount of spending on the part of the taxpayers of the Town for Fire and EMS services. If you seriously want to consider this concept, a true and accurate performer should be prepared and presented to the Council for your consideration. I got tons of supporting data on all of these points. Since debate is not an option afforded to us as citizens, neither at the Public Hearing nor at Council Meetings, I'll gladly offer my details at whatever form may exist. In conclusion, we should not lose track of the fact that the taxpayers and citizens of this community are you, as Councilors, are supposed to be working for. Their voices were heard loud and clear at the last Town Council Meeting, that they expect you to get your spending in line with something significantly more reasonable than what has been presented so far. The budget vote was a really good first start, and likely all that could be accomplished at that point in time. But we've got much more work to do."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you, Kevin."

Mr. Bouchard – "Thank you."

Shane McGillan – "Speaking tonight in regards to how the Town Meeting information is posted to the public. I know it's posted here and the two banks we have in Town, but it seems, at this day in age, a little bit irrelevant to be posting at places where nobody has, in this day in age, going into each place anymore. I know you guys, most people do online banking now, and some people might step foot in a bank once a year, and the Town Office, maybe once or twice a year. I don't know what if it can be changed. Post it at businesses in Town where people go in regularly, whether it be R&J's, the IGA, you know, stores, the Post Office, but places people go on a regular basis so they can see it. Now, I know it could be beneficial, possibly, I know the Town has a social media page on FaceBook, at least one posting there before the meeting to let people know it's out there. I did read some comments on our FaceBook page that people don't know what the information is until after you guys have the Meeting. It's kind of pointless to have it

done after the fact. So if there's any change, it can be done. It'd be, I think, beneficial for citizens in Town to know that. The other item I have is, I have the Agenda for tonight's Meeting here, that's provided here. I went down to the bank and looked at the one at the bank and they're a little bit different. On Old Business, the one at the bank, Katahdin Trust, there's only one item under Old Business, and it's what's posted here. But under Other, there's nothing. So, I kinda feel that they should kinda be the same as they go out to the public, unless there's a reason for change. I know it says on it this was edited because there was a Council conflict, someone couldn't be here or whatever, it should say the same thing before you guys go into a meeting, cause this one has five bullets under Other and the one at the Town and Katahdin Trust doesn't have any. And, I have a picture of it if you want to see it. That's all I have. Thank you."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you, Shane. Anybody else? If not, we'll move on to Old Business."

V. Old Business

A. Ordinance 22-05 Public Ordinance Hearing

A Public Hearing was held for the Fire and Rescue Services Cost Recovery Ordinance on June 22, 2022 at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers of the Fort Fairfield Municipal Building. There was no one that spoke for, there was no one that spoke against, and no one that spoke neither for or against at the hearing.

"Fire and Rescue Services Cost Recovery Ordinance 22-05."

The recommendation is that the Town Council approves the Fire and Rescue Services Cost Recovery Ordinance 22-05.

Motion: Mr. Ouellette moves to reject the Ordinance.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion:

Mrs. Libby – "What grounds?"

Mr. Ouellette – "I think it could be reintroduced and we'd be given more time to study it. I've researched three towns that have it, the Ordinance, it's quite different but they took a long time to set it up. I wasn't able to get all of the information cause a couple of the Fire Chiefs are on medical leave, but I will get the information to you next week."

Mrs. Libby – "So what would the flaws in it be? Like, the way that it's written, what is it supposed to do?"

Mr. Ouellette – "I'm sorry, Melissa."

Mrs. Libby – "I just said, what would the flaws in it be? Like, the way that it's currently written, like what?"

Mr. Ouellette – “Well, there’s a lot to it. Like, Mr. Bouchard illuded to. Knowing what it will do, ISO Rating is very important, and that’s what each Fire Department is rated on and that’s what your Fire Insurance is rated on, so it is important to get it right.”

Mrs. Libby – “Right. I’m just not sure how it’ll affect our ISO Rating when it’s geared towards billing. That’s what my question is on that, cause, in my almost 10 years in insurance, I don’t know how Fire Department billing affects. It’s your distance from the Fire Department that affects your insurance rating, not necessarily how the Fire Department does the billing. So that’s why I’m just asking. I want to make sure that I’m understanding where the”

Mr. Ouellette – “Every ambulance service or Fire service that I contacted was different, how they billed.”

Mrs. Libby – “They are. Yup.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Some only have Fire, not Fire and Ambulance. I think it’s an important thing to have, but I think it needs to be researched a lot more than just this. I performance needs to be made for us to have any idear on how much this is gonna cost us. Or, how much did you bring in for income?”

Ms. Powers – “D.C. is here and he actually spoke to that, when it was presented.”

Mrs. Libby – “Absolutely.”

D.C. Fenderson – “Good evening. This ordinance would have zero affect on ISO. I actually just spoke to ISO earlier in the week, today, to do our update for our ISO rating that we should hopefully have soon and hopefully it will improve. This also will cost the Town and taxpayers nothing, because it is designed to bill those that have insurance. To be fair and equal, everyone who has a structure fire will receive a bill, but as you can see in the Ordinance, it is up to you all to decide, if you choose, to bill citizens or not. If you specifically write you will only bill insurance companies, no insurance company will pay it. I know this because I have researched the over 250 communities that do this billing through Central Maine Cost Recovery, which is the largest fire billing agency in New England. This Ordinance is based on those 250 City Ordinances, Town Ordinances put together. The one that works the best to get the most back from insurance companies, that wording that works best. So, yes, they’re, every Town has different wording in their Ordinance. Some are very short, some are longer. This Ordinance is compiled to fit our Town and to make sure that we’re able to recover the most from insurance companies. Currently, we recover zero from fire calls. Zero. So, any amount of money we able to recover would be money that we don’t currently recover. So, again, to clarify, this would cost the taxpayers zero, this would have no effect, positive or negatively on the ISO Rating, and this has been thoroughly researched by the leading company that does Fire Department cost recovery in New England, not just Maine, but all of New England. And, this is an Ordinance that I worked on with them, using the templates from those other Towns, so it has been thoroughly researched. If there’s any other questions.”

Ms. Powers – “To clarify, this is for Fire, this is not EMS?”

D.C. Fenderson – “This has nothing to do with EMS billing. This is solely for a Fire Department response, not to do with an ambulance, or if you, if an ambulance comes and transports somebody, this is just the Fire related expenses. When I say Fire related, so this could be a hazmat spill where there’s no fire but we respond and do clean up, or anytime the Fire Department goes and somebody is not transported by an ambulance.”

Mr. Ouellette – “So did you do a performer on this?”

D.C. Fenderson – “No, this is, this is an area, again, any amount of money that we were able to recuperate from insurance companies is if we’re able to recuperate one dollar, that’s one dollar we did not have.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Where will the dollar go?”

D.C. Fenderson – “To our equipment, our vehicle replacement. Which hasn’t been funded in the last two years.”

Mr. Butler – “Does Presque Isle and Caribou do this?”

D.C. Fenderson – “Caribou does and Presque Isle, I’m not sure if they’ve officially done it, but it is something that is in the works for them as well.”

Mr. Butler – “I see. Okay.”

Ms. Powers – “And, if I remember correctly from the last time you presented this, without this Ordinance we cannot”

D.C. Fenderson – “Correct. Without an Ordinance, you cannot bill for Fire Cost Recovery because there’s nothing in statute that says you can bill. The only way you can bill, is by creating a Town Ordinance. That’s why every Town has to adopt an Ordinance if they want to bill for Fire Department Cost Recovery. So, and it also would apply to, like car crashes. We can bill the auto insurance for the clean up and the response. It also allows the Council to revisit the pricing and, and this price scale incase prices should go up or down, it allows for that as well. So, it’s, the reason this Ordinance is so long is because it has, there’s been so much research and effort put into it to make sure A, it’s effective at getting insurance companies to pay because that’s, that’s the target audience is the insurance company, it’s not the person that just lost their house. But to be fair just like with medical billing, everyone has to get a bill and the bill has to be based on the same set standard pricing. So, it will come to you guys if the person doesn’t have insurance and you, or whoever is in you spot, will make a determination on whether anyone has to pay.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Okay, so, so, on the Memorandum, Section 1. Cost Recovery Billing Authorized, this is any person in or business who shall receive emergency medical or Fire Department services requested by any such person or on behalf of such person by any other person acting in good faith and in the interest of health or safety of such services, recipients shall pay for the Town of Fort Fairfield a fee for services provided. Then, Section 2. Definition of Services, you’ve got billable costs associated to personnel and apparatus, response to fire permit violations, response to a hazardous material incident, response to a vehicle crash or vehicle fires, response to an aircraft crash, response to fault fire or sprinkler

alarms, response to water related emergencies, stand standby for utility lines in the roadway, scene and safety control at traffic accidents, any, any other incident as determined by the Fire Chief, so these are all, these are all things that you can bill for?"

D.C. Fenderson – “Yes. It basically, anytime the Fire Department goes to a call that isn’t an ambulance call.”

Mr. Pelletier – “So, either the insurance company is gonna to be paying or the individual’s gonna be paying.”

D.C. Fenderson – “Correct.”

Mr. Pelletier – “That’s the way I’m understanding it, is that right?”

D.C. Fenderson – “Or you are, you as the Council, are able to waive the fee. But, yes, the intent, and how ever community that has accepted this Ordinance, is the intent is to collect from the insurance company. Many insurance companies have it built into a plan that if they receive a bill, they pay a certain fraction. 75 dollars, a hundred dollars, whatever it may be. We can’t ever seek that unless you have an Ordinance that allows you to bill.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Thank you.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Anyone else? If not, I wanna thank you.”

Motion: Mr. Ouellette moves to reject the Ordinance.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Vote: Motion did not pass.

No – Mrs. Libby, Mr. Butler, Mr. Kilcollins

Aye – Mr. Ouellette, Mr. Pelletier

Mr. Kilcollins – “Next, we’ve got Other.”

Mr. Butler – “Mr. Chair.”

Mrs. Libby – “We still have to do something with it.”

Mr. Butler – “We still gotta vote to accept the Hearing or the Ordinance or not.”

Mrs. Libby – “Or we could make a motion to accept the Ordinance.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Okay. Alright. So, do we have a motion to approve the Ordinance?”

Motion: Mrs. Libby moves to accept the Ordinance.

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion:

Mrs. Libby – “So, I guess before”

Mr. Pelletier – “I don’t know enough about it.”

Mrs. Libby – “So, as far as concerning insurance, the concern that was brought up, I can tell you that this billing does not affect the ISO Rating, as far as insurance is concerned. So, if that’s the concern then that’s my comfort level on it. So, are there other concerns? Because I don’t have any with it, I just want to know if there’s other”

Mr. Butler – “My only, it’s not a concern, we were talking budgets and stuff like that, and, and revenues and other Towns are going, thank you, but they’re, you know, when you respond some of these fire for that Kevin has so welcoming read, written, read for us, you know, this is just to recover some of the stuff in the Fire Department, sending the Fire Truck out on something that’s you know, that probably could have been preventable, or, you know, that with insurance with an air crash and stuff like that. I mean, it’s just to recoup some type [inaudible] sending that truck out.”

Mrs. Libby – “Well, it gives us the right to be able to bill the insurance company. And, as a Council, if an insurance company does not approve a claim and the citizen is billed, we have the right to waive that bill.”

Mr. Pelletier – “[inaudible] before the Council?”

Mrs. Libby – “Yes. So, we’re not billing the citizens extra, we’re allowing them the ability to bill the insurance companies. Which, right now, they don’t have, so we can’t collect on services from insurance companies.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Right. I think, I think as this Ordinance is, is put into place, as it’s being used, we may find that there’s some adjustments that we can make. But, at least right now, they could start, you know, acting on this as soon as they could. And it’s, it’s, you know, if there is some good information that comes about we, we can always add it to it.”

Mr. Ouellette – “I don’t know if the public is aware of what the Ordinance, Ordinance is. Obviously they didn’t come to the hearing.”

Interruption - Janet McGillan – “Didn’t know about the hearing.”

Mr. Ouellette – “I think they need to know more about this before we push this through.”

Mrs. Libby – “I think it’s our job as the Council to explain it to them when they have questions though, so, if we understand it and we feel comfortable, it’s our job to make the decisions”

Mr. Ouellette – “Well, I certainly don’t understand it. And, I researched it quite a bit and talking to Fire Chiefs, three of them that I talked to, they want me to come sit down with them, tell me how it works, each community is different, their billing is different because they provide services for other communities as well.”

Mrs. Libby – “Did you sit with our Fire Chief?”

Mr. Ouellette – “No. I did not.”

Mrs. Libby – “Did you reach out to our Fire Chief, the one that asked for the Ordinance?”

Mr. Ouellette – “I just got his information on paper.”

Mrs. Libby – “Okay. Because that would probably be my first stop would be my recommendation.”

Mr. Pelletier – “I just got this packet at six o’clock last night, so I don’t know anything about it, that’s why I’m not in favor of something I know nothing about, so, I, I would just table it if we could table it, until we know more about it.”

Ms. Powers – “So, it was presented at previous Council Meeting, and discussed at previous Council Meetings, and this is just the information from the Public Ordinance. This is just reiteration of what was already discussed at Council Meeting. And, it was also discussed at the Department Head Budget Meeting.”

Mrs. Libby – “And there was a Public Hearing.”

Ms. Powers – “And there was a Public Hearing. So this isn’t brand new information that you just received at six o’clock last night.”

Mr. Pelletier – “I got this last night at six o’clock, but.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I just, you know, I just feel it’s good business, like I said, I, I know that if there’s some information that comes forth that would benefit our community and Department Heads with this, we can adjust accordingly. But, I think as sooner as, as possible we can start billing insurance companies, you know, the benefit it is to our community, so.”

Mrs. Libby – “I would just rather bill insurance companies than the citizens. Like, I don’t want to see, but that’s where people are going to have to be informed the fact that if they do have a claim that’s denied, that they can come to the Town and they can ask for forgiveness for their portion, you know. So.”

Mr. Ouellette – “And, that’s done in a lot of communities.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “If so, we’ll go for a vote.”

Motion: Mrs. Libby moves to accept the Ordinance.

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: Above.

Vote: Motion passes. (3 Ayes, 2 Nays
Ayes – Mrs. Libby, Mr. Butler, Mr. Kilcollins
Nays – Mr. Ouellette, Mr. Pelletier

VI. Other

A. Minutes for Town Council Meeting 6-15-2022 and ORD 22-05 Public Hearing on 6-22-22

Motion: Mrs. Libby moves to approve the Minutes.

Second: Mr. Ouellette seconded.

Ms. Powers – “For clarification sir, can you make sure that we list the Town Council Meeting and the Ordinance as listed, before asking for votes [inaudible]. It’s more than one set of Minutes.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yeah, the, the ORD 22-05 Public Hearing on 6/22/22, for the record we’ll add that to that Motion.”

Motion: Mrs. Libby moves to approve the Minutes from the Town Council Meeting and the Ordinance Public Hearing.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmative.

B. Clarification of FY 22.23 Budget Motion and Vote

Background: Council voted on the motion “I make a motion that we meet somewhere in the middle of those two places between this unfunded CIPs and the Flat Budget.”

Discussion: There was no actual budget amount voted on by Council. To operate starting FY22.23 on July 1, 2022, the Town Manager’s Office will need to know the budget amount.

Recommendation is Town Council makes a motion with clarification on FY22.23 Budget.

Ms. Powers – “The motion and vote for fiscal year 22/23 that was made and passed on 6/15/2022 was an arbitrary monetary amount.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “So as it stands, at this time, we’re looking at a number that was ranging in that 5,258,095?”

Mr. Pelletier – “We voted on a budget that would give us a deficit of \$854,870. With what I received last night, and I looked at, it looks like a deficit of \$1,006,615. That’s a difference of \$151,745 of extra spending. I move to the Council direct the Manager to redo the budget expense sheet to match what was voted on the last budget meeting, which would leave us a deficit of \$854,870.”

Ms. Powers – “So, if Council were to do that, because we received our second ARPA funding, so we can’t use that in the revenues, you’ll notice your revenue is different as well. But, we can’t use that amount for the next fiscal year, so we have to remove that from the revenue side, because we are receiving it in this fiscal year.”

Mr. Pelletier – “The ARPA amount 173,675, that was in the last Consolidated Income, it wasn’t in this one, so you removed it.”

Ms. Powers – “We had to. Because we are receiving it in this fiscal year. We will not be receiving that in the next fiscal year.”

[long pause]

Mr. Kilcollins – “So in that amount that was averaged in what her directions were, the figures were right at that 5,258,095.”

Mrs. Libby – “So, when I made the motion, I wanted to get us to a 24 Mil Rate, and I know that the Mil is not firm, but we look, we were looking for a figure that would get us to that and then when we talked about it we were at 800 and I don’t remember the exact amount off the top of my head, but deficit of 800,000 and something. Approximately, yes.”

Ms. Powers – “Approximately. But you have to add the 173 in then because, and that’s, I don’t like to make predictions on the Mil Rate, because I don’t really know what that will be until October first. However, if you’re just doing numbers based on what we already have, that’s about 20 as opposed to 23, because it’s breakdown 1853, it was 173 that came in. But again, I don’t have the specific number. It’s very difficult to ask me to do a budget with an arbitrary number that does not exist. So you’re, you’re literally asking me to start July 1st with a number that doesn’t exist and I’m not comfortable with that, because it is my responsibility, once the Council votes on a number to follow through with that number for that entire fiscal year, by Charter, I have to do that. So, without that number I cannot do that.”

Mr. Ouellette – “What puzzles me is the income for the Fire Service. It’s the same as the last two years, and we know that’s not a number that we could really use. For that number, I assume that we could get a figure for the whole year from June 1st of last year.”

Ms. Powers – “Are you talking about reimbursement, the income side? DC actually just spoke with our new provider for the billing and he can inform you.”

DC Fenderson – “Hi, again. As we spoke about several meetings ago, I don’t remember exactly which one it was, but, we’ve switched from Maine Billing Services to Comstar Ambulance Billing. Maine Ambulance Billing was not holding up their bargain, their end of the deal. They hadn’t billed anything in 2022. So, Comstar took over a week and a half ago. So, within 12 hours they had billed every run from January 1st through June 1st. There’s currently three days this week that they haven’t already billed for. We haven’t received any money in yet, because it’s only been a week and a half since the bills have been submitted. In contrast, Maine Billing Services did billing once a month, at the end of the month, so they were essentially two months behind when they sent out. So, Comstar is three days behind, so we will be receiving our funds in a much more timely fashion and we won’t have to fight as much with insurance companies. Sometimes, if it’s extended beyond whatever the insurance company has for a set period of time, you have to do an appeal process. We won’t have that problem because they’re being submitted, it looks like twice a week they go in and bill all the runs that are in there ready to bill, so.”

Mr. Ouellette – “So, do you have a number?”

DC Fenderson – “I don’t have an accurate number because we haven’t received anything for 2022 yet because Maine Ambulance Billing did not make billing services do anything.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Can we base it on the number that we did use last year? I remember seeing a number that came in that we used.”

DC Fenderson – “I believe the number is the same number from last year.”

Ms. Powers – “It is the same number as the 400, but they didn’t bill, so we haven’t received an income.”

DC Fenderson – “I, I, I have yet to receive 365 days worth of billing, so I can’t update that number until I do. Hopefully that will be soon, because as I’ve said, now everything up to three days ago has now been submitted and billed, so that, that income should be coming in shortly.”

Mr. Ouellette – “When I look at the numbers, that could easily be a Mil.”

DC Fenderson – “I understand what you’re saying, but I, I’m unable to give you a more updated number until I actually get 365 days worth of bills paid.”

Mrs. Libby – “Do you have a total amount that was billed?”

DC Fenderson – “I have not got that. I have requested, but I did not get that back from [inaudible].”

Mrs. Libby – “And, if we didn’t receive anything for 365 days, do we, like I’m sure there must be some follow-up that was done?”

DC Fenderson – “We have received payments. I haven’t received a full year’s worth of payments, so.”

Mrs. Libby – “So, we were receiving some, we just hadn’t received the year.”

DC Fenderson – “Well, we are still receiving payments. Today, we got two payments for ambulance bills that were prior to 2022. We just, none of them until last week, none of the bills in 2022 had been submitted to insurance companies because our billing company was not doing what they needed to do.”

Ms. Powers – “So, from January to June 15? There was no billing that was done. We handed it over to the new billing company a week and a half ago, and they billed all of it from January 1st to June 15th.”

DC Fenderson – “In less than 12 hours.”

Mrs. Libby – “So why was there no billing done?”

DC Fenderson – “I, I have reached out to the company numerous times. The owner, the now owner that took over in November, hasn’t been in the office.”

Mrs. Libby – “And, did we pay for the service?”

DC Fenderson – “We do not pay. We pay a percentage of what they receive in income. So, we haven’t paid bills because she hasn’t been in to send us a bill. But we are receiving payments for the things she has submitted for bills. And, just so you know, we’re not the only ambulance service that has this problem. I know of at least three other in Aroostook County that have switched because of the same issue, and there are two other ones that I’ve spoken with that are in the process of switching now.”

Mr. Pelletier – “When you bill like that, you don’t know when you’re going to get your money.”

DC Fenderson – “Correct.”

Mr. Pelletier – “If they’re waiting that long to bill and then it goes to the insurance company and you’re going to wait for them, so it’s, it could be months before you get paid.”

DC Fenderson – “Correct. Comstar, everything’s submitted now, up to like I said, three days ago, and then there, it looks like Tuesdays and Thursdays, or Mondays and Thursdays are the days they’re billing. So, Thursday, they should be billing those six, plus whatever we have today for runs.”

Ms. Powers – “If I remember correctly, it’s in a system now. They, they go in and find the bills, we don’t.”

DC Fenderson – “So, they have a different, they, so, everything’s automated with Comstar. Maine Billing did everything the old way – paper bills, calling on the phone, faxing. Comstar’s all electronic, so I went through the process with them of switching us, them to our billing agent, automating our system, so now they get all of our runs. They get into our EMS system, get our runs, they submit it electronically to all the insurance companies and the insurance companies can then send us electronic funds transfer. So, the cut down, the turnaround time on the actual bill is significantly reduced. Whereas before, Maine Billing got into our billing com, they printed our bills, they went through it, they coded it, they sent a paper bill to the insurance company, the insurance company would then approve it or deny it based on how long they took them to bill it, send an appeal, then, they would send a check to them in the mail again. So, it’s significantly decreased the amount of the turnaround time for payment, but again, I don’t know for sure how long that will be. I know it will be significantly less. They’ve only been a week and a half since they’ve been approved to actually bill, so. And, every Chief I’ve talked to, including large departments at Bangor, Scarborough, Van Buren just switched, so everyone I’ve talked to has had great success and it’s a lower percentage that we’re being charged on our recovered amount. I believe Maine Billing was five and a half or six and Comstar is five. It’s, it’s cheaper and it’s more efficient.”

Mr. Butler – “So, we really haven’t seen a lot of revenue coming in because of the other company?”

DC Fenderson – “Correct. Correct. So, that’s a problem has been addressed and hopefully the next time we meet I’ll be able to speak with you and give you a better update and better pictures.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Thank you.”

Mrs. Libby – “So the deficit amount that we had voted on was \$854,870. So, but that does not cover.”

Ms. Powers – “That was discussion, but the actual motion that was made and that’s, that’s what I’m having a hard time with, the actual motion that was made was ‘I make a motion that we meet somewhere in the middle of those two places between this unfunded CIPs and the Flat Budget’. That we meet somewhere in the middle, isn’t an actual monetary amount. I need to have a number, otherwise, my fiscal year budget is, is an arbitrary amount and I am not comfortable with deciding what that number is.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yeah. The only number that I came up with was minimal standards of meeting Department Heads and it’s just my number was 5,258,095. Anything less than that, we don’t meet contract.”

Mrs. Libby – “I’m sorry, what was the number you said at the beginning?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “5,258,095.”

Mrs. Libby – “And what does that give us for a total for the deficit?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I think around, I, I, that’s a hard one to put, but I’m going to say somewhere around 23 and a half and 24.”

Mr. Pelletier – “What’s the deficit amount?”

Mrs. Libby – “Yeah, I need to know the deficit amount.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I didn’t bring that. I just worked on the total number off on what our payroll contracts run that we approved to meet standards in them and cutting everything that brought me down to that number and I could be missing some, but it wouldn’t be much on that.”

Mrs. Libby – “Yeah, I mean, I guess, I didn’t say it correctly, but like, going back in the minutes, it’s, I mean deficit amount of 854,870 with an estimated Mil Rate of 24, estimated obviously, was what my understanding was that we voted on.”

Mr. Pelletier – “That’s what my understanding was.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yeah, and if you circle that, that’s gonna be.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Well, it was my understanding also that would be enough to take care of the Town.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yup, that’s right.”

Ms. Powers – “What was asked, no, what was asked is, is it enough for our Staff. If you go back and read the minutes, the question that was asked of me from Councilor Ouellette, is it

enough to provide for our Staff, not to provide services for the Town. So I answered that question, yes, it covers us being able to pay our Staff at the rates that they're supposed to be paid at."

Mr. Pelletier – "With the raises? The percentage of the raise and all that was in there?"

Ms. Powers – "And the Collective Bargaining [inaudible]."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Yeah, the 5,258,095 would, would make it work minimal."

Mr. Pelletier – "That would give us a deficit of 854,000?"

Mrs. Libby – "But, it still affects services, services, services will be affected by that amount."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Yes, services will be affected."

Mrs. Libby – "I don't know what those will be, but."

Mr. Kilcollins – "We don't know that yet. This, that's the minimal bottom number that's it, anything less than that, I mean, even at the number we're probably gonna have a hiccup or two and, and know that something could come about, you know. That's not funding any of the reserves, that's not, that's just turning a budget. I mean, it's"

Mrs. Libby – "It's very far from ideal, but."

Mr. Kilcollins – "It's scary."

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – "Just a stupid, dumb questions question, Consolidated Expenses 22/23, dated June 13th, the sheet that has zero reserves, has total expenditures of \$7.9 million, you're proposing five?"

Ms. Powers – "No, that's without the School."

Mr. Kilcollins – "That's without the School."

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – "I understand."

[interruption] – Janet McGillan – "So, how are you gonna do that? You gonna [inaudible] the school? The Town is responsible for the School, so you can't drop the School out."

Mr. Kilcollins – "No, I realize that."

Mrs. Libby – "What will happen is our, we're gonna lose some services, there's gonna be some stuff that's gonna. It will be able to pay staff, but there's gonna be, I mean, there's only so much to go around, so, I don't know. At that amount, there will be cuts to the expenses, or cuts, I'm sorry, to what the departments have."

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “I don’t know where you’re getting your number, Bob, I mean, that’s, that you’d be slash and burn to get to five million.”

Ms. Powers – “We have Municipal Expenses and Municipal Revenue. The amount of money that is on here, on your Consolidated Expenses, that comes from the School, is not part of our Municipal Expense and our Municipal Revenue. It is why each tax bill has a breakdown of what your Municipal Expense, your School Expense and your County Expenses on your individual tax bills. It shows you what your tax dollars are going towards. So, what we’re discussing is I need to know what the Municipal Expense amount is from Council for me to be able to move forward with the budget as of July 1st, 2023, 22/23. There is nothing else you can do about the School or the County.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “5,258,095 thousand.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “Just, Bob, 5258095?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “52589500.”

[interruption] – Sharon Ouellette – “So that is the last column. That is the million-dollar deficit and that is a 25 Mil, so we all understand what that is.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yeah, it’s, it’s in that equation, but I’m not basing it really at the Mil Rate, other than what I picked up on from last year, but don’t, I mean, that’s my figures and I’m just trying to go into each Department and draw a line and even at that amount, it’s, it’s, it could suffer some Department Heads. But, I’m just looking at, you know, both sides of the table.”

Ms. Powers – “In the Original Budget that was presented to Council in March at the first Department Head Budget Hearing, we have since cut \$1,474,026 from Municipal Budget to accommodate Council’s requests each time we meet. And, we are very below bare minimum, so services will have to be cut and it’s just a fact you can only provide services for the amount of money that you have to do that with. So, we can’t, you know, pretend that we can buy tires for the Public Works Department, you know, later this year if we need them if the money is not there. But, what I will tell you, is that I am not going to choose a number for you tonight Councilors. You have to give me that number. I can tell you what I want, but you are not going to like it because I already presented it to you, and you said no.”

Mrs. Libby – “The specific number you’re looking for is the Municipal Expense number, correct?”

Ms. Powers – “The Municipal Expense. I have to have that or I cannot run a budget for fiscal year 22/23.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “If no budget passed, the Charter provides that the last passed budget can be used.”

Mrs. Libby – “Alright, using the number from last time, and I just need someone to please verify that I’m correct, the Municipal Expense would be \$4,868,764.”

Ms. Powers – “You’ve just eliminated your Fire and EMS Service by doing that.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “The only number I, this is my push on it, that came up with, that won’t eliminate, not saying that all departments will be running at 100 percent, it won’t, would be 5,258,950, would, that’s a slash, that’s just. That’s gonna make everybody get up and go to work in the morning.”

Mr. Butler – “And what would the deficit be with that figure, Bob?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “What would that be? Would you have a quick number on that Andrea?”

Ms. Powers – “Yes. \$1,244,201.”

Mr. Butler – “One million what?”

Mr. Pelletier – “Two hundred forty-four thousand.”

Mrs. Libby – “Even? One million?”

Mr. Pelletier – “Well, it’s 201. 201.”

Mrs. Libby – “And, what does that put us at an approximate Mil Rate of? It’s just how I can.”

Mr. Pelletier – “It’d be 25 I’d say.”

Ms. Powers – “25.5 to”

Mr. Pelletier – “26, maybe.”

Ms. Powers – “Maybe. But, again, it depends on what the state gives us for evaluation on our Homestead and Bette for Veterans. It depends on what percentage they value that at, what we get for that and what we get for the Municipal Revenue Sharing. So, that final number works out to be.”

Mrs. Libby – “So all of those final numbers come in when?”

Ms. Powers – “In the fall, September.”

Mrs. Libby – “September, okay. That seems to be the big issue that we keep running into, is that everything comes in September and we have to decide now. We’re guessing.”

Ms. Powers – “Because we are a fiscal year, we are not a calendar year. Yes.”

Mrs. Libby – “Is there a way to rectify that?”

Ms. Powers – “Yes. By supplemental tax bills to get you through that point [inaudible].”

Mr. Ouellette – “I move that we table the budget vote until the Town Council has had time to review these new budget numbers.”

Mr. Butler – “[inaudible] we have to have a budget by the 1st.”

Mr. Ouellette – “I don’t want to kick the can down, but.”

Mrs. Libby – “But then we just have to have another meeting and sit here and do the same thing, so we might as well just do it tonight.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We gotta have it before the first, don’t we Andrea?”

[interruption] – **Kevin Bouchard** – “No you don’t.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We don’t.”

Ms. Powers – “So, just like last year, according to Charter, you, one we have to run off of the last but, you have to. You can’t just continuously run off of the previous years, you’ll have to meet again, you have to discuss it until you come to a vote. It’s not, it’s not just a reason to stay with a flat budget, because really, a flat budget doesn’t exist for us. Because we have Collective Bargaining Agreements and inflation. You’re lying to your citizens if you tell them that you can run things for the same amount that you had last year in the budget, if you ask for that again this year, because you have been repeatedly told and shown that, that is not possible to do. In order to provide the services for the citizens at the level of care that they’ve been asking for and what they have always had.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “And that’s how I come up with that number. Basically took last year’s, added the inflation we have, plus the contracts that we’ve signed, and I know it’s not right to the penny, but it’s not far off. I don’t know what else to do. I don’t know how far off that would be, but it’s, it’s, it’s in line. I mean, I’m sure there’s some, there’s some tweaks but, I’m sure we’re not far off from that number. I think that number would, would work on what we have to do. No necessities [inaudible].”

Mrs. Libby – “So the amount that I originally said is the difference of 151,000 and without that amount we can’t fund services.”

[inaudible side-conversation between Mr. Pelletier and Mr. Kilcollins]

Ms. Powers – “Well, we went through everybody’s budgets the very next day and we have to cut services significantly.”

Mrs. Libby – “Do you have an example of what services you guys discussed? Like. I just don’t want to make a decision without all the information.”

Mr. Hanson – “I understand the frustration here, but this is my biggest concern is that we have this much labor and I’ve got to watch it do this much work for a year, and you are the folks that are going to suffer from us doing this much work. We’re talking about half the plow runs, we really are because the, the cost of fuel has gone up so much, those trucks will not run without fuel. When the last budget came down, the discussion, I understand it was

kind of vague, but we went back and looked at it, and said this is what's gonna happen. We had to, we had to cut fuel back by \$25,000 in a year where fuel prices have over doubled. That, I don't think you can say any more. The men want to get out and do something, they."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you, Darren."

Mrs. Libby – "Yes, please."

Chief Cummings – "So last year, the Police Department budget was significantly slashed due to zero staffing. If we flatline a budget, I believe the budget that was passed last year was \$456,000. If we flatline our budget to that, I'll essentially have to lay off a Police Officer, we will not have the adequate Police coverage. So far this year, our officers have dealt with 1107 calls for service, including very serious crimes, sexual assaults, rapes, domestic violence, very dangerous incidents with firearms. Our budget covers one officer working 20 hours a day, plus on-call time. There's, there are no elaborate items in our budget. We, we met after the last Council meeting and I was told to cut close to \$33,000 from the budget. Out of a \$580,000 budget, that's significant. It takes away over-time that we need to send a Police Officer to the Police Academy for four months, takes away equipment, fuel, I'm concerned that we won't adequately be able to function off of that. Any questions? Thank you."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you, Shawn."

Mrs. Gaenzle – "For the Library, I wouldn't even be able to keep the heat on. At \$6,000, which was what was in my heat budget for last year, I can't even keep the heat running. I hit \$8,000 this year, I had to take from other line items. I upped it for this budget. If you go back to that \$6,000, you're gonna have busted pipes, you're gonna have water damage, you're gonna lose your building."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you."

DC Fenderson – "After our last meeting, we went back and I had to cut \$168,000 more than we already cut, so that meant nine line items were zeroed. Zero dollars. Plus five other line items were substantially cut. I've talked to you all numerous times about maintenance and vehicles and funding reserves, and we've talked about how we need to use our maintenance budget to repair our vehicles, so maintenance was one that I kept a little money in. It should be enough for about three weeks before we run out of money for vehicle maintenance, so if we cut more, I just don't know where you want me to cut it from and still be able to provide a service."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Thank you."

Mr. Senal – "After last budget, Council asked us to pay \$36,000 from Rec Department budget. That \$36,000 took away from our ability to fix the steps that are broken out front and currently, right now dangerous, took away some plans for renovating inside for storage spaces, which we can no longer use because they are not fire rated, as well as we had to get rid of some staffing and some programs. So, already some programs have been cut. So, I mean, it's definitely one of those things where I, I don't envy your decision, but just know that already the decision that you made has cut programming in our community."

Mr. Kilcollins – “Thank you. So, if we, I’m lost, did we get a motion? You know, at this point, we, we, that’s, that’s [inaudible] the best I can do. Somebody want to give a motion.”

[interruption] – Janet McGillan – “Can I ask a question on the monies that are supposed to be filled out for the Fire Department for the EMTs? We can’t even know what a budget number is? Now it’s like a \$300,000, \$400,000? There’s some money that could be used for part of this budget, if it’s coming in. I mean, there’s your buffer, if that’s what it needs to be.”

Ms. Powers – “It’s already included in the revenue.”

[interruption] – Janet McGillan – “Well, what’s the number then? You couldn’t tell us what it was.”

Mrs. Libby – “408,642 was last year’s amount.”

[interruption] – Janet McGillan – “And it’s going into this year’s budget?”

Mrs. Libby – “The same amount is going into this year’s budget, the 408.”

[interruption] – Janet McGillan – “No, but we didn’t get the money from this year. Where is that, that money is calculated into next year too? So you got 800,0000 going in there for”

Mrs. Libby – “So last year, was 408,642, and this year is 408,642 and that could be more than that, but we know that it’ll be at least that amount because we had that amount that we collected first year.”

Ms. Powers – “We don’t have a rolling budget, we have a fiscal year budget, so at the end of budget at 6/30/2022, that’s it, that’s the end of our budget. The new budget is supposed to start July 1st of 2022. So, any revenues or expenses as of that point does not exist moving forward through the fiscal year 2022/2023, unless Council has voted to move anything forward. So, we did receive extra revenue in other areas that have put us to a point where we close out the books, we will be actually ahead. But, you can’t carry over what you had from fiscal year 22, 21/22 into automatically 22/23, it doesn’t work that way.”

[interruption] – Janet McGillan – “So, does that money just dissolve? What do you do with the money?”

Mrs. Libby – “What happens with the final deficit?”

Ms. Powers – “Again, there is no deficit. There is no balanced budget until the budget of the fiscal year ends on 6/30/20 whatever year we’re on.”

[interruption] – Janet McGillan – “I don’t run my business that way.”

Ms. Powers – “Because a municipal budget is not the same as a business or a bank or any of them. We have to run off of a fiscal year, and when that fiscal year closes, that’s whether we were either in a deficit or we were right at or we were an overlay. So, right now, you have a very healthy overlay possibility for next year. Given it’s 1.4 million dollars from the municipal side of things. The only thing that you know that is constant is the School and the

County. That's it. Whatever happens throughout the fiscal year, next year, could change infinitely, as we saw during the Pandemic. Things can change from day to day, what our expenses and revenues are that come in and go out, so there is no such thing as overspending any of that stuff. That's why I need a number so that I don't overspend anything. Otherwise, I could be overspending. If you have an amount in your head that you think you're supposed to be at and you don't tell me what that is, and you're asking me to guess to get to that point, then we have to have some other serious conversations. I need an actual monetary amount so that I make sure that we do not go over that amount."

Mr. Kilcollins – "52 58 95."

Mr. Pelletier – "How much?"

Mr. Kilcollins – "52 58 95."

Mr. Ouellette – "I'd be more receptive to five million even."

Mr. Kilcollins – "Won't work. Five million won't put us, we're close, you're close, but five million won't meet the contract payroll contracts that we have set."

Ms. Powers – "Having a hard time understanding how just throwing a number out there, when you've been presented with budget numbers of what it costs to provide these services and then coming up with an arbitrary number, it's very difficult for me to understand why. I understand that Council does not want to raise the Mil Rate to raise taxes, but we have to remember, that if you are experiencing inflation at home, we are definitely experiencing inflation here with the Town. Because we are not responsible for just one household, we are responsible for all households, and we have to provide services for all of them, the businesses, the citizens, the visitors, everyone that comes to Fort Fairfield, who lives in Fort Fairfield, who works in Fort Fairfield. And, in order to do that, we have given you what those numbers look like. Now, Council did not like any one of the three budgets that were presented that were asked to be presented, so we did, and you, you came up with a motion that is again, an arbitrary monetary amount, and I'm asking you, again, to come up with an amount that actually befits and befalls the budgets that were presented to you. So, making the statement that I'm more comfortable with five million dollars because of what you think the Mil Rate will be, I don't understand how you can do that without understanding what my Staff has just told you was going to happen. So, please be careful, whatever your number is, this is my, my last plea for you, please be careful whatever that number is that you vote on tonight, that you want me to follow and have my staff follow, please be very thoughtful and you understand what that's doing, that what that amount is and what that will do for next year's fiscal year."

Mr. Pelletier – "Where'd you get that number from?"

Mr. Kilcollins – "Collected, collected data from the Budget Advisory Committee. Numbers that they had come up with and then followed on where we were on payroll contracts and then looked at basically last year's budget and then just met criterias of handing her a budget and it's going to work but there's, there's no ice cream. None. We'll worry about it as the year goes on. One of the Departments need money, we'll have to find it, but if somebody throwed a motion for 5258950, we'll all sleep tonight. And, like I said, that number I

acquired, not right by myself, it was a good part from the Budget Advisory Committee, numbers that I pulled from them mostly, and then from what I reviewed. I promise, if we get, if we get a motion for 5,258,950 everybody will sleep well tonight. We're not, we're not gonna sleep with satin sheets, but we'll sleep and we'll be able to move our community and Town forward."

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – "So, you're not gonna vote on the School and County Budget?"

Mr. Butler – "We can't."

Mr. Kilcollins – "We did. We have no say in that."

Mr. Butler – "We have no, we have no say on the County Budget or the School."

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – "I know you don't, but you have to approve it. You gotta vote that in your budget. [inaudible]"

Mr. Kilcollins – "Well, once I vote this in, that amount plus what their amount is, is automatic, I mean it's added."

Mrs. Libby – "This Consolidated Expense form that we have in front of us with the amount"

Mr. Kilcollins – "And I couldn't have gotten that amount without the Committee."

Mrs. Libby – "Could you clarify?"

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – "I get it. You gotta, you gotta approve it."

Ms. Powers – "Yep. That's just the amount that you"

Mrs. Libby – "I can't hear."

Ms. Powers – "This is what I gave to my Staff, the next day after, and that's how we came up with making those cuts, and all of the services that are, are cut now based on, on that amount. There will be loss of Staff and lots of services."

Mrs. Libby – "On the amount that's on this page. So, that's where the extra that Bob is saying would come in."

Mr. Kilcollins – "My figures are, yup. It's been a tough battle, but I can assure you that it, it would work, if we got a, if we got a motion for that amount."

Mrs. Libby – "Can you verify that information for us, Andrea?"

Ms. Powers – "So, we had to cut \$437,586 from...what was your number? What was it?"

Mr. Kilcollins – "5258950."

Ms. Powers – “So, we won’t have to cut staff. We’ll probably still have some loss of services because we took the percentage of what was cut versus the budget amount for each department. So, instead of just, you know, six, divided it by six, you can’t do that because if you do, you automatically eliminate departments by doing that. Because we have some Departments that have less than \$150,000 for their fiscal year budget and we have some that are over a million. So, it was based on the percentage of their budgets. So for some of these Departments it will put money back into it, their budgets.”

Mrs. Libby – “Do you have a copy of the three options that you presented to us?”

Ms. Powers – “No, because Council said they didn’t want them. The first one that was asked for was totally funded with CIPs, Capital Improvement Plan Reserves, the second one was partially funded Capital Improvement Plan Reserves and the third one that was asked of was no funding of the Capital Improvement Plan Reserves, the CIPs. [inaudible]”

[inaudible side-conversation between Mr. Kilcollins and Mr. Pelletier]

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “The first one [inaudible] on the second page, those are your numbers. When I take what you told me, those are the numbers [inaudible]”

Mrs. Libby – “Yup. Okay.”

[inaudible side-conversation between Mr. Kilcollins and Mr. Pelletier]

Mr. Butler – “Bob, your 525895, the School Budget and the County Taxes are included in that figure?”

Ms. Powers – “Not included in that number. That’s the Municipal number and then the full budget includes the School’s amount and then the County Taxes. The School’s amount is \$2,203,432 and the County Taxes \$277,209.”

Ms. Leighton – “Excuse me, Andrea. Can I ask you a question?”

Ms. Powers – “Certainly.”

Ms. Leighton – “Bob is proposing 525895, that is \$525,895, there’s a number missing.”

Mr. Bouchard – “There’s a zero on the end.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “That’s \$5,258,095.”

Ms. Leighton – “It’s got to be \$950.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Right, \$950. Right, yup.”

Ms. Leighton – “Thank you.”

Mr. Butler – “That’s what’s throwing me off.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yup, \$950. Thank you, Ella.”

Ms. Leighton – “You’re welcome.”

[long pause]

Mr. Kilcollins – “But that’s beating the numbers using all the input from the, from the Budget Advisory Committee, it’s using all the numbers on the deductions that the Department Heads has done the past three meetings, and that’s it.”

[interruption] – **Kevin Bouchard** – “I’m, I’m not quite sure about the Budget Advisory Committee.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “No, no. I should, I should word that differently. I, I picked up an idea that there was numbers, and I apologize. I didn’t bring my scheme booklet that I had showed you, but I picked up a number from what you guys had picked up and then it put me in gear to follow through with the rest of the information, because at this point in time, the cuts that everybody made, where we have contracts on employee, if we go below that, it’s, it’s, it’s not, we’re voiding contracts.”

[interruption] – **Kevin Bouchard** – “The Budget Advisory Committee was not in line with your recommendation.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “No. Oh, absolutely not. No, no, no, no. I’ll, I’ll make that for the record. No, you’re exactly right. There was information in that I picked up that I used to get that number, but not any recommendation, no. absolutely not.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Well, when I add that total I get \$7,738,950 higher than the Consolidated Expenses sheet that we have in front of us. Am I wrong?”

Ms. Powers – “Well, yeah, because the one that’s in front of you is the \$5,020,000.”

Mr. Butler – “Mr. Chair, I make a motion that we run with the numbers 52 58 950.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “And a motion, do we have a second?”

[long pause]

Mr. Ouellette – “I make a motion that we approve for that dollar figure, instead of 5258 we put five million even.”

[long pause]

Mr. Pelletier – “I’ll second it.”

Mrs. Libby – “You can’t do it because Mitch already has a motion on the table.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Oh, that’s right, okay.”

Mrs. Libby – “I’ll second Mitch’s so we can discuss a little bit more.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We had a motion and a second, so we’ll go for discussion.”

Mrs. Libby – “So, my thought on this is what you’re proposing is going to put us at 25 and a half to 26 Mil, roughly. If we look at the non-funded CIPs that puts us at 26 is what our prediction.”

Ms. Powers – “26.5 to 27.”

Mrs. Libby – “I’m just looking at it as if we’re going to be at 26 or 26 and we can be at 26 with out Departments funded versus 26 without them funded. I don’t want to be at 26 to begin with, it’s not where I want to be, I don’t think that’s where any of us want to be.”

Mr. Pelletier – “No. None of us want to be there.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Just think of what that percentage increases to our, to everybody’s families.”

Mrs. Libby – “Yeah.”

Mr. Ouellette – “That’s like 24, 25 percent?”

[interruption] – Sharon Ouellette – “No. It’s like 31 percent. Increase in taxes.”

Mr. Pelletier – “31 percent.”

Mrs. Libby – “I don’t think that’s accurate.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “A Mil Rate of 24 is approximately 25 percent increase.”

[long pause]

Mrs. Libby – “I just feel like we’re at a point where we can’t afford what we have.”

Unknown audience member – “I’d second that.”

Mrs. Libby – “That’s not what I want to say or do, but I just.”

Ms. Powers – “Well, it’s, okay, so let’s, let’s talk about that because that seems to be the theme here is that we can’t afford what we have. It’s not about affording what we have, it’s about deciding what you want for services. Now we have given Council what it costs to run those services that you are asking us to provide for the community. That’s what we’re doing here, and whatever it costs, is what it costs and then that’s what the Mil Rate will be based on the budget that you vote in. So, it’s not whether or not you can afford those services, it’s what you want to provide for services. You have to let us know what it is that you expect. We can only do, so our pressure for our, our side of things is that you expect from us a specific level of services to be provided for the citizens in the Town of Fort Fairfield, and you have now

told us on multiple occasions that you're not willing to fund what it costs to provide those services at that level that is being expected. So, whatever you give us for a number, just like I told you previously before, we will do whatever it is you tell us to do, but you need to understand whatever that is may affect how services are run in the Town of Fort Fairfield for fiscal year 22/23. So, and that's like, that's Council's decision to make. You, by Charter, decide on what that is, you had that back to me and I facilitate that budget for the year. But I, I have to let you know and remind you that it is going to affect services one way or the other, whether it eliminates, depletes, however you want to talk about it, and unable to afford it, but you, you have to understand it is, it is basic black and white. The services that are being required to be provided, cost this much money. We have presented that budget to you and what we think is fair and just for running those services in the community. If you are adamant about a Mil Rate that we cannot provide for you today, given that we can't do that until the fall because we do not run on a calendar year, we run on a fiscal year, then I, I can't tell you honestly what that is. I know you asked me to give you my suggestion of what that might be, but I cannot give you a firm answer on that because I do not have all of the numbers. I have all of the numbers on what it costs to run the services that are required of us by Council, but I don't have what that number looks like for a Mil Rate. So, the decision, and it is a difficult one, we know that, we don't take this very lightly either, we know that this is a very difficult decision for Council to make, because you are ultimately making the decision what to provide for the citizens of Fort Fairfield. So, we understand that, and that's why we're asking you to clarify this tonight, because what was given to us previously at the Budget Meeting June 15th, doesn't give us that information, and it's wrong for us to just work and spend money that doesn't exist, that has not been voted on. So, I, I understand that but I want to clarify, it's not about that we can't afford it because you raise the taxes in any community in the State of Maine based on the services that are provided, that the budget is what it is to run those services. Now, the Mil Rate gets set based on the other information that comes in, so your, your valuation, your Homestead, your Bette, your Veterans, all of those things all calculate that Mil Rate in that formula at the end, that's how you get a Mil Rate, and that's how you raise the taxes in order to pay for those services that you have budgeted for. So, it's not about whether afforded, not afforded, that sort of stuff, it's, it's about what do you want to provide for services for citizens, and you need to understand that when you come to a conclusion on a number, that number will affect what is provided for services. Good, bad or, or other, I mean, that's just the way it is."

Mr. Pelletier – "Well, we've got services that we spent a lot of money for, that we really probably shouldn't have spent the money for, we should've gone about it a different way to keep our costs down and now we're stuck with them, but, now we're seeing results of those decisions that were made before some of us came on this Council. So, I don't know what we're gonna do with it, but, taxes, people were complaining about the taxes, well they are complaining about the taxes, and the taxes are high and nobody wants to pay a 26 Mil Rate. Or 25, or 24. But the bills have gotta be paid."

Ms. Powers – "Right, and, but I will remind Council that, that is not unusual for Fort Fairfield. 28 Mil Rate, as a matter of fact, is not unusual for Fort Fairfield. Go through year by year, by year for Mil Rates, and I've shared that information with Council on multiple occasions, so."

Mr. Kilcollins – "So the difference in the five"

Ms. Powers – “The Mil Rate is not what we should be hung up on. What we should be hung up on, is what do you want to provide for services?”

Mr. Pelletier – “I think everybody wants the services, but we just gotta get the cost down.”

Ms. Powers – “I think getting it down by \$1.4 million is an excessive amount.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yeah, I mean, we’re at the point where, like you had made a motion at 5 million, the difference in a final number of a Mil Rate on 5 million or the 258,000 you probably wouldn’t even justify it, it would be roughly the same, but if we, it, it’s, I know, it’s hard. 5 million is what we need, but we need the 258,000 to meet the minimum need.”

Mr. Ouellette – “If you have the right budgets amount locked in, that’s coming in, then I feel comfortable with doing it.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Right.”

Mr. Ouellette – “But we don’t have those numbers, we’re missing some of them, and we have for the last couple of years.”

Ms. Powers – “No, every year.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Every year.”

Ms. Powers – “Be clear about this, every year we do not have those numbers until the fall before Mil Rate gets set. That’s why Mil Rate gets set October 1st.”

Mr. Ouellette – “I’m not arguing that.”

Ms. Powers – “This is not a new thing. This happens every year, and it’s very difficult on my side of things to have to project what the State’s going to do. I, I don’t know what that’s going to be, and, again, it’s based on all of the rest of the work that the Assessor’s Office does as well that affects our value.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Well, the difference between the straight 5 million and adding the 258”

Ms. Powers – “Right. It’s a Mil and a half. You’re over [inaudible].”

Mr. Butler – “But there’ll be loss in services.”

Ms. Powers – “With the, I’m sorry, say that again?”

Mr. Butler – “There’ll be a lot more loss of services [inaudible].”

Ms. Powers – “If you do 5 million, yes, because I’ll have to cut an additional, on top of the 437,586, I’ll have to cut an additional 20,000 from the budgets that we already just cut.”

Mrs. Libby – “In the 5,258,900”

Ms. Powers – “No, the 5,020,509.”

Mrs. Libby – “But the number that Bob’s proposing, we wouldn’t cut services?”

Ms. Powers – “No.”

Mrs. Libby – “And that puts us at 25 and a half to 26, roughly?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Janet Mills may be very generous this year too.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “What’d you smoke for supper tonight?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “She wants to get re-elected.”

Ms. Powers – “Well, I, I, but we can’t, we should not be getting hung up on Revenue Sharing either because that fluctuates so much between now and September. As you see, when we collect Revenue Sharing throughout the year, that fluctuates as well, so midway through the year, we’re seeing like a loss, the percentage point, we actually were over by 12,000 something this year in Revenue Sharing. So it changes and it always seems to catch up at the end of the year, if not go further. But, I don’t ever, you know, put that and think that that’s going to happen every year. We have to, you know, the numbers that are given to us are the numbers that we need to use.”

[long pause]

Mrs. Libby – “So, the Consolidated Expense form that we have in front of us, versus the number that Bob is telling us, is less than what’s on there?”

Ms. Powers – “The number that is on the Municipal Expense side of the Consolidated Expenses that you’re looking at, is, is less than what is proposed, yes. Is that what you’re asking?”

Mrs. Libby – “Yeah, so, the Municipal Revenue on here is 6,494,535, and he’s proposing Municipal Revenue as five million.”

Ms. Powers – “No.”

Mrs. Libby – “Is that not what you’re saying? Oh, oh, oh, okay, okay, okay.”

Ms. Powers – “Councilor Ouellette would like to see a five million dollar expense.”

Mrs. Libby – “Just making sure I’m looking at the.”

[long pause]

Mrs. Libby – “So what do we have on the table right now? We’re just discussion?”

Mr. Pelletier – “Yeah.”

Mrs. Libby – “Okay.”

Ms. Powers – “Councilor Butler’s motion and then discussion.”

Mrs. Libby – “Okay. [long pause] I don’t think we have any other option, honestly.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Doesn’t look good.”

Mr. Ouellette – “When I add Bob’s numbers, I get higher than the grand total on this Consolidated Expenses sheet.”

Mrs. Libby – “You will, because”

Ms. Powers – “Because what he has proposed is higher than the 5,020,000.”

Mr. Ouellette – “[inaudible] 5 million.”

Mrs. Libby – “So it’d be”

Mr. Ouellette – “So that’s why my 5 million works out [inaudible] 20 thousand.”

Mrs. Libby – “His is higher by \$238,441.”

[inaudible conversation between Councilors]

Mrs. Libby – “Because it doesn’t. This is still cut of services, what’s on this paper. This is off of the 854,870 and it’s a substantial cut.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Maybe we can’t afford a new service.”

[long pause]

Mrs. Libby – “So that puts us at a deficit of \$1,245,056, Bob’s figure.”

Mr. Pelletier – “1,244,201.”

Mrs. Libby – “\$1,245,056 versus the 1,006,615. 238...”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I mean, I don’t propose it’s the perfect budget by no means, but at this point, where, were it’s at, pages are going to be turned and we can move forward, and like I say, it’s, it’s no extravagant budget by no means. There’s sacrifices gonna be made, but.”

Mrs. Libby – “So the difference is \$238,441, but the Departments are able to be funded?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Right.”

Mrs. Libby – “Yes. Okay, without cuts?”

Ms. Powers – “Well, I mean, we already made the cuts.”

Mrs. Libby – “Right, without additional.”

Ms. Powers – “With this, we’ll be able to put some of that back in there for them so that we’re not seeing the excessive cuts in services and loss of jobs.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “It’s just, it’s just bare bones you’re gonna get.”

[interruption] – Sharon Ouellette – “Melissa, what’s your Mil Rate for that? Mil Rate?”

Mrs. Libby – “Yeah, about 26.”

[interruption] – Sharon Ouellette – “26 Mils?”

Mrs. Libby – “Roughly, estimated.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “And I mean, if we get, there’s all kinds of ifs, we could get extra Revenue Sharing, we could get, we could get”

Mr. Ouellette – “We could get a bigger bill.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “It’s not gonna get any worse.

Mr. Ouellette – “We could get a bigger bill.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “You know. At least, you know, this whole system is working in that direction.”

Ms. Powers – “So, Fort Fairfield traditionally has an aging fleet. All of our equipment, our vehicles, traditionally everything is very old and outdated. Staff has brought that to Council’s attention repeatedly, and we are not fully funding our Capital Improvement Plans Reserve accounts. 2019 Council also decided not to fund those accounts and we are not planning for replacement of vehicles, equipment, programming, any of that stuff. So, doing this puts us even further behind for that, so I want Council to be very clear that this doesn’t mean that, yes, we can put some funds back into their, their lines, but that doesn’t mean that you’ll be seeing that same 2019-2020 fiscal year was a great year for the community. We were able to get a lot accomplished. We were able to put all those, those accounts in all of the things that we did that helped us during the Pandemic, as a matter of fact, we did all the investing, all of the things that we did and we didn’t have to borrow any extra money, we didn’t have to do anything unusual that year because we did those investments and we put that money in towards those vehicles and to programming, and the services. But since then, since the Pandemic, we have just completely slashed back budget after budget. This will be our third budget doing that. So, every time you do that, you are unable to upgrade your services for your citizens, you’re not able to do better each year. The cost for equipment does not go down, it, it continuously goes up, the cost for providing the services goes up, it never goes down, it, and it’s the same, and it really should be reflected in the Mil Rate, and, and this is why we talk, every time we go to set the Mil Rate, Council and I talk about the importance of having an overlay, not always choosing the minimum Mil Rate every time, and putting yourself below an overlay, having a deficit at that point in time even before you start your

fiscal, or, you know, really getting into your fiscal year, these are things that you have to keep in mind moving forward as well. I just want Council to understand, that yes, you know, whatever number you, you give me tonight we will work through, but those decisions have consequences so we have to be conscious of that moving forward.”

Mr. Ouellette – “I looked at our long-term debt [inaudible].”

Ms. Powers – “Do you? Because I would like to discuss that, if you don’t mind? You made reference of the Town being an outstanding principal balance debt of \$4.1 million and we do not have an outstanding principal debt of \$4.1 million. We have a loan outstanding principal balance with the ambulances with Aroostook Savings and Loan that has five years left on it, so essentially really four years left on that loan, and that’s at \$211,275.91. We have the Ladder Truck at \$450,806.98, also again at four years left. We have the EMS services that’s 12 years left on that 15-year loan, at \$989,774.92. We have one year left of a paving bond with the State of Maine at \$51,970 and we have a five-year Town Office Bond with the State of Maine at \$293,655. So, as of yesterday afternoon at 4:30, our outstanding principal balance for the Town of Fort Fairfield was \$1,997,482.81, not \$4.1 million.”

Mr. Pelletier – “Do we have a loan out with the Bank of Boston?”

Ms. Powers – “No. [inaudible] We have bond. Paving bond and when they built the Town Office.

Mr. Kilcollins- “You know, and at that amount, there won’t be any roads repaired. Minor maintenance will be done, but no.”

Ms. Powers – “So, within, within four years, you will be, you will remove \$51,970, you will remove \$211,275.91, you will remove \$450,806.98, leaving you with under a million dollars in outstanding principal debt, in, in four years.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “That puts us in good shape. We’re in good shape right now, yes.”

Ms. Powers – “If Council would ask questions of the Town Manager’s Office, I would be very happy to give that information. But, if I don’t know what your questions are, I can’t answer those.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “No, we’re, we’re, we’re very fortunate that we have Department Heads that take as serious in their jobs to do what they do and provide us with the services, and it was tough this year to cut like we did and, you know, we, we’re sorry but at this point we’re still fortunate to have great Department Heads running for us. We appreciate it. Everything. And that’s in that rundown of that dollar value, it’s, it’s, it’s, it’s a band-aid, for this year, that’s a band-aid, but it’ll work. Nobody’s gonna get rich off that number.”

Mrs. Libby – “We gotta vote.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “We got a motion, do we have a second on that amount?”

Mrs. Libby – “I seconded.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “On the 5258950? Okay, we’ll go for vote.”

Motion: Mr. Butler made the motion to approve the amount \$5,258,950.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Discussion: Above.

Vote: Motion passes. (3 Ayes, 2 Nays)
(Ayes: Mrs. Libby, Mr. Butler, Mr. Kilcollins)
(Nays: Mr. Ouellette, Mr. Pelletier)

C. Budget Advisory Committee Ordinance

Background: Article 1 § C-15 A “Any ordinance which repeals or amends an existing ordinance or part of the Fort Fairfield Code shall set out in full the ordinance sections or subsections to be repealed or amended and shall indicate matter to be omitted by enclosing in its brackets or by strikeout type and shall indicate new matter by underscoring or by italics.”

Discussion: The [Budget Advisory Committee Ordinance 22-02] was voted on by Council at the April 13, 2022 Council Meeting. The Budget Advisory Committee needs direction from Council how to proceed.

The recommendation is that Council votes to repeal the Budget Advisory Committee Ordinance 22-02.

Mr. Kilcollins – “Do we have a motion?”

Mr. Butler – “The, I just got a question, because the Budget Committee, I mean, was supposed to be working in, in, in, I guess, with you for the budget.”

Mrs. Libby – “The problem is with the Ordinance.”

Ms. Powers – “Not according to this. This, this Ordinance circumvents the Town Manager’s Office completely.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “Which is how it’s designed. The Budget Committee works for you, we advise you.”

Mrs. Libby – “However, the problem with that is, that the Budget Committee is being giving, given information not from us as a whole, but from like pieces and you need to be able to have it one whole correct amount of information.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “I agree a hundred percent. I, I’ve struggled with that, but the numbers we were given were not always accurate.”

Mrs. Libby – “Right, so you guys are doing all this work for nothing, because you’re not working off the correct numbers. So, if we don’t circumvent the Town Manager’s Office and the information comes from the Town Office, then you would be getting the correct, most accurate, up to date information.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “The Ordinance specifies that she will cooperate with us in our requests.”

Mr. Ouellette – “To be fair to the Budget Committee, they need a year to perform.”

Mrs. Libby – “Oh, absolutely. However, to be fair to the taxpayers, that one person cannot supply the information to the Budget Committee and expect them to go with those numbers and then make a recommendation to us, because they’re not even having the correct numbers. So, I make a motion that we revise the Ordinance for the Budget Committee, so that it does not circumvent the Town Manager’s Office.”

Ms. Powers – “Amend?”

Mrs. Libby – “To amend, yes, to amend the Ordinance.”

Mr. Butler – “I’ll second that.”

Mr. Pelletier – “But isn’t the Budget Advisory Committee getting information from the Town Manager, right now?”

Ms. Powers – “No.”

Mrs. Libby – “No, they’re getting information from, they can get it from the Town Office, if I’m correct, but they can also get it from us, as Councilors, but we, as the Council, shouldn’t be individually feeding them information, is what I’m saying, because then they’re, they’re forming a bias, and in getting information from, like, say you think one thing and I think another thing and you’re feeding them all this information, then you can bias the Committee, and the Committee should not be biased, the Committee should work off of solely the information, the correct information, and form their own opinions. We shouldn’t give them our opinions because then it completely messes up the whole way that they should be operating.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “They’ll get their information just like we get it, from the Town Manager.”

Mr. Ouellette – “But to follow through what you’re saying, but then we need a Hearing on this.”

Mrs. Libby – “I don’t know what we need to do in order to be able to amend it.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I don’t think we need a hearing to add to it.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Yes, we do.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “Yes, you do. You’re changing an Ordinance.”

Mrs. Libby – “Okay, so then, if we need a Hearing, then I think we should have a Hearing. Because it doesn’t, it doesn’t work the way that it was.”

Mr. Levesque – “Mr. Chair and the Councilors, if your vote is to amend the existing Ordinance, what needs to be done it needs to be crafted, send it to the Town Council with recommendation from the Town Council, Town Manager at that point, if it is introduced, there will be a Public Hearing advertised and held. After the Public Hearing is advertised and held, you have, you have to have a second Council Meeting, which could be the same night as that Public Hearing. At the time that you’re discussing, considering the amended Ordinance, if that’s what happens, you have three options. You can approve the Ordinance as presented, you can deny the Ordinance as presented, or you can amend the Ordinance on the floor, based on comments that you receive, anything else, strike this word, add this word, whatever it is, but that’s the process if you vote to amend that Ordinance, it would come back to you and then be introduced and so on, so forth, we have to carry on business.”

Mr. Ouellette – “Thank you, Tony.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I, I feel that, that they have worked hard in what they had for information. They served their duties well. I think it would be well suited for them to, to gain access. Like we are able to gain access, from the Town Manager, along with we’ve all learnt the first little curveball here, you know, and I apologized to the Committee man times, doesn’t make it right. I, I, they hit the floor with their feet just running and, and we knew we were gonna make mistakes, but I think adding from what we’ve learnt, it would only benefit the Budget Committee [inaudible].”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “I’ll share with you my perspective, okay? We were put in a room, we had a Freedom of Access Presentation on that computer, we were left to our own devices. No direction, go guidance, no nothing, okay? So, if we failed, and again this is Kevin speaking, not the Budget Committee, if we failed in our attempts to do what we perceived we were supposed to do, tell us what you want us to do and tell us how you want us to do it and I’m pretty sure that Committee will respond to your requests. It amazes me how well this group of seven works together. You know, Jim’s been to some meetings, you’ve been to a few meetings, it’s, it’s a phenomenal group of people that I never in a hundred years would’ve thought things would’ve gone that smoothly. Give us some direction and I think that you’ll find that we will follow your instructions. We’ve been begging for that, for over a month now.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Absolutely. I agree.”

Ms. Powers – “So, to be clear, what I’m asking for is the Ordinance to be repealed, not the Budget Advisory Committee, because the Ordinance, as it stands, is ineffective. Again, as Mr. Bouchard stated, they were just thrown into it. There was no direction, there was no training, there was no information, there is no chain of command of information, there was nothing that would indicate to them what it takes to provide information for the Council. Budget Advisory Committees across the Country, not just in the State of Maine, across the Country do work with their Managers Offices, because many of them are in charge of the budget. How are you to get your information if you are not working with that Office that provides that information? There’s a lot of miscommunication, a lot of opinions as opposed to facts that are shared because they have nothing else to go on.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “Straighten us out. Tell us what [inaudible].”

Ms. Powers – “I can’t because the Ordinance does not allow me to, and that is how. No, my integrity and my job is very important to me and that Ordinance circumvents my Office completely, as you said, by design, and I, for one, do not agree with that because if you want a true and just system that actually is working for the benefit of the citizens, then you need to have the Office that prepares the budget part of what they’re doing and giving that information. The only thing I could give you is what I gave Council to begin with, which I provided every member of the Budget Advisory Committee with, and that took a long time because it took a long time to put all of that information together for all of you then I had to do it seven times again. So, it’s important that Council really think about this. I, I would like to see an entire new Ordinance proposed. That’s what I would like Council to do, and it should be one that’s not written by a Councilor. It needs to come from the Office that provides the budget and the Town Attorney to make sure that it is not, because this Ordinance does not follow the Charter, at all. So, I think it’s important that we put something else in all together, because as it stands now, it is ineffective and we’ve seen, if you’ve watched any of the meetings, it’s, it’s not, the purpose of a Budget Advisory Committee to discuss budget, not personnel. Because by Charter the Town Manager is the only one who is affected by personnel hiring, firing, all of that. You shouldn’t be discussing anything other than the budget that is presented in front of you. So, and, and that comes from training and learning and discussing how to run the Budget Advisory Committee Meetings and the purpose of what that is. It, it can be a very successful thing if done properly, but putting that on them in such a short amount of time is unfair. I don’t like to use that term very often, but it is unfair. And, it, it, it was a lot in a very short amount of time. We work with the budget year round, literally year round, so just because you vote on a budget tonight, that doesn’t mean that ends. That’s literally the beginning for me and it doesn’t end. And, as a matter of fact, we move on to the next year’s budget while we’re currently in the fiscal year budget after Audit. So in November we are already looking at fiscal year 23/24 and if we have a Budget Advisory Committee that can come up through that process with us, they can see how that works, why we do what we do, how, why we have the meetings that we have, and they can be participating in those things and those discussions moving forward. Whereas, it was very separated, the Department Heads, myself and the Budget Advisory Committee. So I, this is why I have given the recommendation that we vote to repeal the Budget. If you would like to just amend that Budget, that’s, you’re welcome to do that. I’m not going to stop it.”

Mrs. Libby – “I’m happy to motion that we can repeal the Budget Advisory Committee, but I want to make sure that we get another Ordinance put in place because I think that the Budget Advisory Committee can be very effective I think we set them up for failure and I think that was nothing of their doing. They did not have all of the correct information, they worked off of what they had. They had no direction. They’re very smart people trying to do the best they could to help the Town and they need to have a better setup to be able to operate.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “You don’t need to change the Ordinance to do that. We, we can work within those parameters.”

Mrs. Libby – “I just think that if, I didn’t, I didn’t vote on this Ordinance to begin with because I didn’t think it was written correctly to begin with, so for me personally, I would like to see a completely new Ordinance, not that I want a new Committee, Not that I want a different Committee, that’s not the case. It’s, it’s the way that the Ordinance is written, for me, so.”

Ms. Powers – “If Council should so choose to repeal this Ordinance and would like to see a new one for the July Council Meeting, I can make sure that that is a priority with us.”

Mrs. Libby – “I would like to see that. Because I do, I didn’t want the Committee to begin with because of I was worried that there would be so much extra conflict, but with the people that we have on the Committee, I think there’s a lot of really good, well educated people that can help us, if it’s done correctly and I don’t think this is correct.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Oh, I agree.”

Ms. Powers – “And by doing it in July, it begins the entire process”

Mr. Kilcollins – “That’s right.”

Ms. Powers – “For them from the beginning of the fiscal year to the end of the fiscal year, and what goes on in between that process with the Audit, everything. So they will be fully educated, moving into the next round, versus a month before they were to give [inaudible].”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Proper wording to add to this.”

Mrs. Libby – “So I guess I’ll just rephrase. The motion is that we repeal the current Budget Advisory Committee Ordinance and ask the Town Manager to rewrite a new Ordinance for us to review at the next Council Meeting.”

Mr. Butler – “Second.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “What does your Charter provide for the procedure to do that?”

Ms. Powers – “The Ordinances are supposed to come through the Town Manager’s Office.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “They’re supposed to come from Councilors. Read the Charter.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Well, at this time”

Ms. Powers – “Councilors introduce the Ordinance.”

[interruption] – Kevin Bouchard – “Correct.”

Ms. Powers – “But they don’t write the Ordinance.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Adding to this amendment to a new, I would like legal advice added.”

Ms. Powers – “Attorney Currier told Council this already.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “To what we would define the words that would work.”

Mrs. Libby – “He recommended that we don’t circumvent the Town Manager’s Office the very first time that we discussed this.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yup.”

Ms. Powers – “And, that a Councilor shouldn’t be dropping off an Ordinance to his Office when the Town Manager is off, out of State.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yeah, as long as, as long as the legal wording is sufficient enough for both and I just wanted that added to it of course, but we’ve had a motion and a second. Any other discussion? We’ll go for vote.”

[interruption] – Sharon Ouellette – “So if you repeal the Ordinance, you’re removing all of the members on the Committee, we all understand that. They’re all removed as the dogs off the fishbowl, is that correct?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “In adding to the amendment can we add also that the members that have been elected for their seat continue?”

Ms. Powers – “I think you should. They’re not elected. These are appointed. They are not elected officials. They are an appointed Advisory Committee Member.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yes. Well, appointed, that’s wording it justifiably, legal terms, appointed would stay appointed to this new Ordinance.”

Ms. Powers – “I think it’s, it’s again ineffective if you don’t, because if you disband what we’ve just started and you’re wanting to bring them through this process for the next year, why would you, why would you get rid of what you have?”

Mr. Kilcollins – “I just want to make sure that nothing changes.”

Mr. Butler – “We’re not getting rid of the Budget Committee, we’re just getting this Ordinance and then reword a new Ordinance.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Right. We’re gonna amend it and add to it so it isn’t gonna circumcise anybody that’s on there.”

Mr. Butler – “No. It’s gonna go through legal, we’re gonna have, we’ll have a new Ordinance.”

Mrs. Libby – “New Ordinance. Get rid of this one, write a new one.”

Mr. Butler – “But the Budgets Committee will still be the same.”

Ms. Powers – “I would recommend that you do that.”

Mr. Kilcollins – “Yes. Yes. For the record, I’d like that noted.”

Mr. Butler – “Well, we’ll have to vote on this first, then we’ll have to introduce another.”

Motion: Mrs. Libby made the motion to repeal the Ordinance.

Second: Mr. Butler seconded.

Discussion: Above.

Vote: Motion passes. (3 Ayes, 2 Nays)
(Ayes: Mrs. Libby, Mr. Butler, Mr. Kilcollins)
(Nays: Mr. Ouellette, Mr. Pelletier)

Mr. Butler – “Mr. Chair, I make a motion that we get another Ordinance worded the way that it’s supposed to be worded so they work with the Town Manager and also the Committee that is on board right now stay the same.”

Motion: Mr. Butler made a motion for a new Ordinance.

Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: Motion passes. (3 Ayes, 2 Nays)

(Ayes: Mrs. Libby, Mr. Butler, Mr. Kilcollins)

(Nays: Mr. Ouellette, Mr. Pelletier)

D. Medical Insurance Refund

Past practice for any full-time employee being reimbursed for medical insurance has been for the reimbursement amount to become part of their payroll with a gross adjustment. This requires the employee to pay taxes, FICA and retirement on the amount reimbursed. This also requires the Town to pay FICA and retirement on these amounts.

With Councils' approval, Ms. Leighton's suggestion is that Council change this practice to issuing each employee a Town check for the amount of reimbursement. Checks would be a medical insurance reimbursement issued bi-weekly to remain the same as if it was part of payroll.

By issuing a Town check, we would save the Town the following amounts:

Administration	\$2,606.87
Public Works	\$1,154.28
Police Dept	\$2,743.73
Rec Dept	\$1,150.28
Total Savings for Town	\$7,655.16

Would the Council please approve the above suggestion effective payroll ending 6/30/2022?

Motion: Mrs. Libby motioned.

Second: Mr. Pelletier seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmed.

E. Library Board of Trustees Nominations

Background: The Town has two Library Board of Trustees position open and that need to be filled by June 30, 2022. Mr. Ken Stratton, term expires June 30, 2024 and Mr. John Krause, term expires June 30, 2025.

Discussion: The Town had four applications; Ms. Annette Thompson, Mr. Dan Foster, Mr. James Smith, and Mr. Ken Peters.

Recommendation: Town Council appoint Ms. Annette Thompson to fulfill the term ending June 30, 2025 and Mr. James Smith to fulfill the term ending June 30, 2024 to the Library Board of Trustees.

Motion: Mr. Butler motioned.
Second: Mrs. Libby seconded.
Discussion: None.

Vote: Motion Passes (4 Ayes, 1 Nay)
(Ayes: Mrs. Libby, Mr. Butler, Mr. Pelletier, Mr. Kilcollins)
(Nays: Mr. Ouellette)

VII. Adjournment

Motion: Mrs. Libby motioned.
Second: Mr. Butler seconded.
Discussion: None.

Vote: All Affirmed.

Council adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Submitted respectfully,

Neadra E. Dubois,
Council Secretary