

June 28th, 2010
Council Workshop

The Council Workshop convened at 10:03PM on Monday, June 28, 2010, in Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor Kenneth G. Murchison, Jr., Deputy Mayor Karla M. Bell, R. Mark Goughan, David Martin, Christopher A. R. Bell, and John R. Boone. Mary Kate Barbosa was absent and excused.

Steven R. Buck, City Manager

Council Workshop item #1: Discussion public education materials for the pending establishment of a Charter Commission.

A brief discussion indicated that the three one-page summary papers outlining the Charter Commission process was accurate as amended. The papers had to be amended based upon the legal opinion that the City Council needed to appoint three appointive members to the Commission within 30 days of the election to establish said Commission. The paper may be distributed to anyone requesting such information pertaining to the formation, governance, duties, and timelines associated with the pending Charter Commission process.

Council Workshop item #2: Update of Medical Marijuana Dispensary actions at the State level. The Manager indicated that DHHS had released a listing that day of the entities who had submitted applications to the State to become registered Medical Marijuana Dispensary providers. One application was filed for District 8, Aroostook County, by Leo Trudel of Fort Kent Mills, registered as Safe Alternatives of Fort Kent.

The consensus was to continue to monitor the activity on the dispensaries so that any necessary actions can be addressed by the Council in a timely manner towards the finalization of establishing a Medical Marijuana Dispensary Ordinance.

Council Workshop item #3: Discussion of PUC request to reduce PSAPs and a future Council response. The Council reviewed information from the County of Aroostook responding to the Public Utilities Commission's (PUC) recent call to reduce Public Service Answering Points (PSAPs) from 26 to 15. The PUC recently commissioned a study referred to as the Kimball Report that formulated the recommendation to reduce to 15 the number of PSAPs across the State. After reviewing, the Council directed the Manager to compose a communication in agreement with the issues raised by the County and to recognize Caribou's unique needs to maintain dispatch services due to the blend of services provided by the multi-utilization of staffing and facilities that is accomplished under our current scenarios. The communication will be brought forward for subsequent review and consideration by the Council.

Council Workshop item #4: Review of 457 Retirement Loan Program and Hardship qualifications. As requested, a review of the recently amended 457 retirement plan offered by the City was performed specifically on the ICMA definitions of hardship qualifications to implement a loan from an employee's own retirement funds. Human Resources provided a brief outlining the number of occurrences that ICMA defines as hardships. The burden of proof required by the employee was also reviewed.

Councilors shared concerns on the use of one's retirement funds as a short term loan under these varying hardship requirements. Debate over the prudence of such a practice ensued as well as one's

ability to utilize resources that are owned by the individual versus the City. Although there was lingering concerns as expressed, it was ultimately recognized that the funds are owned by the employee, ICMA already has established the guidelines for loan implementation and payback, and the City Council had so voted on the number of elements necessary to implement the plan at the June 14th, 2010 meeting. No further modifications were suggested for future actions at this time, yet the Council indicated that the plan should be monitored and any difficulties reported to the Council for their future consideration.

Workshop Adjourned 10:20PM