

April 14, 2014

14-09

A regular meeting of the Caribou City Council was held 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 14, 2014 in Council Chambers with the following members present: Mayor Gary Aiken, Deputy Mayor David Martin, Philip McDonough II, Joan L. Theriault, David R. Genthner, Sr., Shane McDougall, and Kenneth G. Murchison, Jr.

Austin Bleess, City Manager and Tony Mazzucco, Assistant City Manager were present.

Department Managers: Penny G. Thompson, Tax Assessor and Kathleen Mazzuchelli, Supt. of Parks and Recreation.

Natalie De La Garza, representing the Aroostook Republican; and Time Warner covered the meeting.

Council Agenda Item #1: Public Input

Natalie Kavin, Presque Isle, offered her opinion on the poor condition of the former Birdseye Building. Ms. Kavin stated that because it is the first thing that is seen, coming into the City, it gives the impression that the City does not care. She stated that it is a danger. She suggested that a committee be formed to study and brainstorm for solutions.

The Mayor commented that the Council and administration are aware of the situation and are working on resolving the issue.

Larry Pelletier, 124 Lombard Road, offered his opinion on the unsightly appearance of a neighboring trailer and the land it sits on. In addition to the property being unsightly, trash and rubbish blow onto surrounding properties thus causing a mess for the neighbors to clean up. Mr. Pelletier wants to see something done to clean up this property.

Kathleen Mazzuchelli, Supt. of Parks and Recreation, announced that she will be retiring in 2014 around September 1st or Labor Day. After servicing the City for thirty-nine years, she wants to retire while in good physical and mental health. Supt. Mazzuchelli submitted a retirement letter to Mayor Aiken.

Mayor Aiken extended the Council's thanks and appreciation for her many years of service to the City of Caribou.

Council Agenda Item #2: Declaration of Conflicts of Interest from the City Council regarding any agenda item.

Councilor P. McDonough stated a conflict of interest with Agenda Item 4-f and Councilor D. Genthner stated that he would abstain on Agenda Item 3-b.

Council Agenda Item #3: Consider authorizing the minutes of the following meeting:

- a) March 24, 2014 Council Meeting

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by D. Martin, to accept the minutes of March 24, 2014 Council meeting as presented. (6 yes) So voted.

- b) March 31, 2014 Special Council Meeting

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by K. Murchison, to accept the minutes of March 31, 2014 Special Council meeting as presented. (5 yes, 1 abstention, D. Genthner) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #4: Consent Agenda

- a) March 2014 Fire Department Report
- b) March 2014 Police Department Report
- c) March 2014 Financials
- d) Approval of Licenses
 - 1. Taxi License Renewal -Town Taxi
 - 2. Rubbish Hauler License Renewal – McNeal’s Trucking and City Sanitation
- e) Lunch Wagon Application
 - 1. Lunch Wagon Renewal – Scott Walker d/b/a Theo’s
- f) Planning Board Appointment
 - 1. Philip J. McDonough, III

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by P. McDonough, to approve the Consent Agenda with Business Items A, B, C, D, and E as presented. (6 yes) So voted.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by D. Genthner, to approve the Consent Agenda with Business Item F as presented. (5 yes, 1 abstention, P. McDonough) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #5: Mini-Split Heat Pumps

7:24 p.m. Public Hearing opens.

No public input.

Manager Bless answered a few questions from the Council.

7:29 p.m. Public Hearing closed.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by P. McDonough, to adopt Ordinance 2, 2014 Series, An Ordinance Amending Chapter 5 Fire Prevention, Short Title: An ordinance streamlining fees for Mini Split Heat Pumps allowing the permit fee to be lowered from \$90.00 to \$20.00. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #6: Municipal Service Fees Ordinance

If adopted this would allow the City to impose service charges on the owner of residential property other than student housing or parsonages, that is totally exempt from taxation under Title 36 Section 652 and that is used to provide rental income. Caribou Gardens, Central Aroostook Association, Facilities, Inc., and Rose Acres are examples of exempted properties that meet the definition. The service charge may not exceed 2% of the institution/organization’s gross annual revenues.

Councilor P. McDonough introduced Ordinance 3, 2014 Series, Short Title: An Ordinance Adopting Municipal Service Fees.

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by J. Theriault, to set a Public Hearing date for April 28, 2014. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #7: Abatement of Taxes

The Council was provided a list of tax amounts that have been on the City’s books for several years. The fourteen tax accounts are for mobile homes that have been moved and for lots that no longer exist as they have been combined with neighboring lots. The total abatement request is \$4,890.10.

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by J. Theriault, to approve the \$4,890.10 abatement request. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #8: Putting Tax Acquired Properties out for bid

Staff is recommending placing four Tax Acquired Properties out for bid.

Map 34 Lot 158	minimum sale \$100
Map 7 Lot 39-32	minimum sale \$100
Map 24 Lot 63	minimum sale \$12,500
Map 16 Lot 8-J	minimum sale \$1,000

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by K. Murchison, to place the four lots out to bid. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #9: Heritage Road Abandonment or Discontinuance

The City has received a request from Rick Solman on the behalf of him and his siblings regarding Map 35 Lots 185 and 179. They are requesting that the City discontinue the portion of Heritage Road that runs along their lot. This section has never been used as a street since it was created in 1956 through a subdivision.

Mr. Bless explained the difference between the discontinuance and abandonment of a road. His recommendation is to presume the property to be abandoned and to move forward with this it is necessary to hold a Public Hearing.

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by J. Theriault, to schedule a public hearing and move forward with the abandonment of this section of Heritage Road. (6 yes) So voted.

Motion made by K. Murchison, second by D. Martin, to schedule a Public Hearing for March 28, 2014. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #10: Approval of 2014 Municipal Budget

Manager Bless presented the Income Budget Message and it is ready for Council approval. As presented using 2013 Valuations, the projected mil rate would be 22.30. The 2013 mil rate was 20.5. The Manager stressed that it is too early to discuss a mil rate for 2014 as there are several unknowns; including, county tax, RSU #39 budget, and final valuation figures.

Income Budget Highlights:

- Contractual Allowance moved from the expense side to the revenue side of the budget.
- 2014 Revenue Sharing amount is \$171,030 lower than 2013
- In 2013 one-time use of Tri-Community dividend payment of \$134,639
- The numbers for Property Taxes, Homestead Exemption, and BETE Reimbursement are not finalized
- Proposed budget includes an overlay of \$86,173
- Tax Lien Costs Collected increased due to new rate the state charges
- Vehicle Registration Local Fee has been decreased to account for the City offering Rapid Renewal
- GA State Reimbursement decreased due to lower amount of GA spending
- Building Permits decreased due to the number of projected building permits
- Department 30 – Fire Department Contracts
- Department 31 – Ambulance increased because there are fewer turn over calls
- Department 35 – Police’s COPS Grant has expired
- Department 39 – Emergency Management increased due to a new state grant
- Department 40 – Public Works increased due to the sharing of the P.W. Director with Presque Isle

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- Department 60 – Trailer Park was decreased to equal the expected expenses
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Councilor Martin stated his position from December, that he would support a budget with a 1.4 mil rate increase and that is all that he will support. Councilor Martin's position of supporting only a 1.4 mil rate increase is restricted to the municipal portion of the mil rate. The mil rate could be a full three mils lower if the State fully funded Revenue Sharing. Councilor McDonough stated that the City sets its budget in the blind because of the unknowns surrounding the school budget and he supports changing to a fiscal year. Councilor McDougall stated that some cuts would be difficult and unpopular in town but that might be the only way. Mayor Aiken requested that prior year budgets be changed to reflect this year's budgetary change with Contractual Allowance. Councilor Theriault supports only a 1.4 mil increase and the City will have to make cuts somewhere. Both Councilors Murchison and Genthner are not committed to only a 1.4 mil increase but will continue to work on the budget. Council Consensus: Will support a mil increase up to 1.4 mil.

Council Agenda Item #11: Other Business

- A. Councilor Martin asked when the Paving versus Chip Sealing Workshop will be held. Manager Bless stated that it is planned for May.
- B. Councilor McDonough wants CEO Wentworth to go investigate the conditions on the Lombard Road that Mr. Pelletier spoke about and to take whatever steps are appropriate.
- C. Nomination papers for the Council vacancy are available in the City Clerk's Office.
- D. The Mayor questioned what could be done to keep logging trucks from coming through town. The Manager will speak with the Public Works Director.

Council Agenda Item #12: Executive session pursuant to MRSA Title 1 Section 405 (6)(C) to discuss disposition of publicly held property.

Mayor Aiken excused himself due to a conflict of interest and was not present in this discussion.

8:03 p.m. Motion made by K. Murchison, seconded by D. Genthner, to move to executive session with City Manager and Assistant City Manager pursuant to MRSA Title 1 Section 405 (6)(C) to discuss disposition publicly held property. (5 yes) So voted.

8:16 p.m. Motion made by K. Murchison, seconded by P. McDonough, to move out of executive session. (5 yes) So voted.

No action taken.

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by S. McDougall, to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. (5 yes) So voted.

Upcoming Meeting Date:

Regular City Council Meeting, April 28, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Regular City Council Meeting, May 12, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Jayne R. Farrin, Secretary