

February 24, 2014

14-05

A regular meeting of the Caribou City Council was held 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 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 Manager: Scott Susi, Fire Chief.

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

Council Agenda Item #1: Public Input

Since the January 13th meeting, Milo Haney has researched and has learned that the City is paying for the Park 'n Ride lights. Mr. Haney spoke in opposition to the number of lights and suggested that one light would be sufficient. Mr. Haney wants to see a breakdown of how much it cost the City to haul snow for the ski sprints that were held earlier in February. Mr. Haney asked questions about rumors he had heard regarding accidents with Public Works equipment. Administration confirmed that there had been two accidents and that both had occurred within Caribou City limits.

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

None.

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

- a) January 13, 2014 Workshop Minutes
- b) January 27, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- c) February 12, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by K. Murchison, to accept the minutes of January 13, 2014, January 27, 2014, and February 12, 2014 as presented. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #4: Consent Agenda

- a) January 2014 Fire Department Report
- b) January 2014 Police Department Report
- c) January 2014 Financials
- d) Liquor and Special Amusement Licenses
 1. Napolis Restaurant, LLC
 2. Caribou Inn and Convention Center
- e) Approval of Quit Claim Deeds
 1. John Rines
 2. Rhonda and Bruce Gustafson

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

Council Agenda Item #5: Accepting Bids on Tax Acquired Properties

Unless waived by the Council, the City's Tax Acquired Properties Policy requires that 20% of the sale amount be placed in the Tax Acquired Properties Remediation Account. Concerning this evening's sales, Manager Bleess recommends that requirement be waived and to put \$27,721 into the Municipal Building Reserve.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by P. McDonough, to accept the bids from Lisa Dobbs for Map 4 Lot 25-K in the amount of \$60,112 and Roscoe Mata for Map 24 Lot 63 in the amount of \$20,010. (6 yes) So voted.

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by D. Martin, to reject the bid from Tracy Babin for Map 16 Lot 8-J for \$675.00 as it does not meet the minimum bid. (6 yes) So voted.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by S. McDougall, to place 20% of the proceeds into the Tax Acquired Properties Remediation Account, \$40,000 into the revenue line, pay off back taxes, and to place the balance in the Municipal Building Reserve. (6 yes) So voted.

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by D. Genthner, to accept the offer from Lena Giggey for the mobile home at Map 18 Lot 31-72 in the amount of \$250. (5 yes, 1 no, S. McDougall)

Council Agenda Item #6: Purchase of Command Vehicle for Fire Department

In October 2013, Fire Chief Susi sought Council approval to replace the current rear wheel drive vehicle. At that time, the Council deemed the proposed purchase price to be too high.

Administration is seeking Council approval to purchase a former police vehicle from the Town of Madawaska. The vehicle is a 2011 Ford Expedition with 5,000 miles for \$23,000.

There was discussion among the Councilors as to whether the Fire Department already owned a vehicle that could serve as a Command Vehicle. Councilor Theriault commented that the Library did not get the person they requested, the swimming pool is being closed, and lights have been turned off. The City has done so much yet the Chief has hired people and gotten some of the things he needs. She wondered if the purchase could be delayed until the City replaces another police cruiser and have the Fire Chief use the retired police cruiser. Councilor McDonough suggested that the City continue to search for a government surplus vehicle.

Councilor Martin is not convinced that a Command Vehicle is needed. Chief Susi stated that everything he needs to respond to a fire scene is in the vehicle and because of this the vehicle goes home with him at night. Otherwise he would need to go from his home to the station to the fire scene. Councilor Murchison noted that the Chief is on call 24-7 and he does not want to see the Fire Chief not having the tools he needs. Councilor Murchison recommends the authorization of this expense. Both Councilors Martin and Theriault commented that several people in the community have spoken to them about the use of the current vehicle. Councilor McDougall stated that the Chief is doing his job and the vehicle is a tool of his job.

Councilor McDonough stated that he does not feel that we have the capacity for a Command Vehicle. He stated that there are enough vehicles in the inventory that if, we need to transport equipment that it can be transported. Councilor McDonough does not think the City makes effective use of all the equipment we currently have. There was discussion as to what a Command Vehicle is, whether there is a need, or whether to pay the Chief a car allowance or mileage. Councilor Murchison stated that this vehicle is a health and safety issue and it is a Command Vehicle because our Commander is in it.

It was suggested by Councilor Genthner, that Chief Susi develop a list of what is needed in a vehicle. He further stated that this area is SUV territory versus a Ford Crown Victoria. With this being the second time that the purchase of a Command Vehicle has come to Council for authorization, Manager Bless requested additional guidance from Council. The current vehicle has reached or is reaching the end of its usable life and that is why money has been budgeted in the Capital Reserve Account. When asked how the vehicle was used today, Chief Susi reported that he traveled to two fire inspections, City Office, lunch, and this evening's meeting. The Chief stated the vehicle is used when he needs to obtain necessary parts and go to the local hospital on behalf of the ambulance service.

Councilor McDonough requested justification for this type of vehicle, the need for four-wheel drive, and what other assets in the Fire Department could be used for those purposes. The need to justify the purchase of a new vehicle was questioned by Councilor McDougall because the Council had already justified the purchase of a new vehicle through the budgeting process. The Mayor offered that the Capital Budget has been set but that doesn't mean that those moneys will all be spent. It was noted that the purchase of this vehicle was budgeted for in the 2013 Capital Budget rather than the 2014.

The Mayor stated that a 2011 Ford Expedition would not be his choice of vehicle because he would guess that most of the Chief's traveling occurs in town and gas mileage for vehicles has improved over the last three years. Councilor Martin does not support the purchase of this vehicle but he has been convinced that a vehicle purchase is justified. He suggested that the Chief look at something new and more energy efficient.

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by J. Theriault, not to move forward, at this time, with the purchase of the Command Vehicle. (4 yes, J. Theriault, D. Martin, P. McDonough, G. Aiken, 3 no, D. Genthner, K. Murchison, S. McDougall) So voted.

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by P. McDonough, at the next Council Meeting to have a discussion regarding the justification for a Command Vehicle. (4 yes, J. Theriault, D. Martin, S. McDougall, P. McDonough, 2 no, D. Genthner, K. Murchison) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #7: Discussion on Budgeting Process

Since the adoption of the current City Charter, the Revenue Budget is not set until June which is six months into the Budget. The City's software is not designed to have the annual budget entered piecemeal into the system causing expenses to be tracked by manually entering the data into spreadsheets thus allowing entry errors to occur. Last year the Council discussed whether or not it would be beneficial to move the City budget cycle from a calendar year to a fiscal year. The Mayor requested that the City obtain a legal opinion as to whether the City can adopt the Expense and Revenue Budget at the same time under the current Charter.

Manager Bless explained the difference between the Contractual Allowance and Bad Debt within the Ambulance Department. Currently both are being shown on the expense report. Typically in municipal budgeting bad debt is reported as an expense. To conform with best accounting principles, Contractual Allowance should be shown as a reduction in revenues versus an expense. The net effect on the budget would be the same.

Council consensus: Contractual Allowance should be moved to the revenue side.

Council Agenda Item #8: LDA Board Appointment Recommendation

Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by K. Murchison, to recommend to the Governor the reappointment of Miles Williams to the Loring Development Authority Board of Directors for another four year term and to authorize Manager Bless to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of the Council to the Governor. (6 yes) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #9: Community Development Advisory Committee

Motion made by D. Martin, seconded by P. McDonough, to appoint Mark Reschke, Carolyn Reschke, Bethany Zell, Barbara Aiken, Janine Murchison, Michele Smith, and Idella Thompson to the Community Development Committee. (5 yes, 1 abstention, K. Murchison) So voted.

Council Agenda Item #10: Other Business

- A. Councilor McDonough introduced Ordinance No. 1, 2014 Series, An Ordinance amending Chapter 2 Administration, Short Title: An ordinance amending the Personnel Policy of the City of Caribou.
- B. Motion made by K. Murchison, seconded by D. Martin, to set March 10, 2014 as the Public Hearing date for an ordinance amending the City's Personnel Policy. (6 yes) So voted.
- C. Motion made K. Murchison, seconded by P. McDonough, to allow Scott Michaud (employee #133) to purchase, with no cost to the City, his years of service to the City from the Maine State Retirement System. (6 yes) So voted.
- D. Anyone interested in serving as a Ballot Clerk is encouraged to contact the City Clerk's Office by March 19th.
- E. The City has received a Safety & Health Award for Public Employers (SHAPE). The City of Caribou is the first municipality to ever earn a four year extension. For the next four years, the City will not be required to have additional inspections. The Mayor extended his thanks to the employees for a job well done.

Council Agenda Item #11: Executive session pursuant to MRSA Title 1 Chapter 13 Section 405 (6)(A) to discuss personnel matters.

The executive session was not held.

Motion made by K. Murchison, seconded by P. McDonough, to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Upcoming Meeting Date:

Regular City Council Meeting, March 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Regular City Council Meeting, March 24, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Jayne R. Farrin, Secretary