

April 18, 2017

17-13

A workshop meeting of the Caribou City Council was held 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 18, 2017 in Council Chambers with following members present: Mayor Gary Aiken, Deputy Mayor David Martin, Philip McDonough II, Joan L. Theriault, Timothy C. Guerrette, and Nicole L. Cote. Jody R. Smith was absent.

Michael Gahagan, Interim City Manager.

Department Manager: Penny Thompson, Tax Assessor.

Robert Clark, Executive Director for Northern Maine Development Commission.

Item #1: Discussion of Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) membership with Robert Clark

Background:

- NMDC is one of seven economic districts in the state and there are approximately 350 districts throughout the United States. This designation is recognized by the Department of Commerce with an annual certification through the Economic Development Administration.
- NMDC provides management support for Aroostook County Tourism, Aroostook Municipal Association, Aroostook Partnership, and the Northern Maine Solid Waste Management Committee.
- NMDC is a membership organization with a base purpose of providing State and Federal services at the local level.
- For the past several years, Caribou's dues to NMDC have been \$13,729. Dues haven't increased for over 12 years.

Caribou's dues help provide:

- Direct services and savings to Caribou in fiscal 2015-2016: \$54,253.
- Regional projects, such as Aroostook County Tourism, Aroostook Partnership, transportation planning grants and others, are valued at more than \$118,821 to Caribou.
- A Phase II environmental site assessment (ESA) was completed for the former Birdseye site at a cost of \$32,000 during the past fiscal year.
- In 2015-2016, PTAC counselors held 32 sessions with 14 Caribou clients that resulted in more than \$10-million in government contracts for Caribou businesses. \$3,200 is the time value for those sessions.
- Small Business Development Center staff met with 16 Caribou clients, conducted 94 counseling sessions with a result in two new businesses and the creation of five new jobs and the retention of ten jobs for other businesses. NMDC spent approximately \$9,800 in time to achieve those results.
- Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) counseled ten Caribou manufacturing clients.
- Tourism – annually a visitor guide is published. NMDC maintains a tourism hotline, has developed a water trails map, plus a bicycle trail map, represents the region at trade shows, runs TV ads in the Bangor and Portland markets. More recently NMDC has moved into social media with blogs. Tourism promotion is valued to Caribou at \$13,600.

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- Transportation – Northern Maine Bicycle Route – is a \$100,000 two-year project – it will start in Fort Kent and go down throughout the whole region.
- High crash studies have been completed and sites have been identified. NMDC is hoping that MDOT will provide funding to improve identified sites.
- NMDC provides a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Region, which is updated each year.
- NMDC provides land use technical assistance, code enforcement training, and works with Planning Boards.
- Commercial loans – In NMDC history, \$14 million has been loaned to Caribou clients, which allowed the leverage of \$24 million from other sources. This has created 1631 jobs and retained 1416 jobs. Currently in Caribou, there are 51 loans totaling \$2.8 million for 30 businesses. Six of those are NMDC loans.
- In the past year, NMDC wrote a CDBG application for a local business and \$144,000 was awarded to help remove the business' fuel tanks.
- MMA provides training through NMDC's video conference site.
- Last year the City saved \$3,000 by purchasing salt through a cooperative purchase.
- By being a member the City receives 20% off contract prices, has preferred status when it comes to having work done by NMDC, plus has a seat on the executive board and other types of boards.

Mr. Clark answered Council questions. Discussion.

Mr. Clark stated that NMDC is willing to work with the City in applying for Brownsfields funding to clean up the former Birdseye site. He believes that they would be able to get \$200,000 in funding.

The money for the NMDC dues are in the 2017 City budget.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Clark for coming and answering questions.

No action taken.

Item #2: Executive Session pursuant to 1 M RSA §405(6)(A) for a personnel matter

6:21 p.m. Time in. Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by D. Martin, to move to executive session pursuant to 1 M RSA §405(6)(A) for a personnel matter. (5 yes) So voted.

7:10 p.m. Time out. Motion made by P. McDonough, seconded by J. Theriault, to move out of executive session pursuant to 1 M RSA §405(6)(A). (5yes) So voted.

Council consensus: To work with MMA on an employment agreement.

Item #3: Adjourn

Workshop adjourned.

Jayne R Farrin, Secretary